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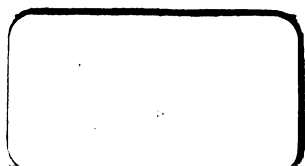
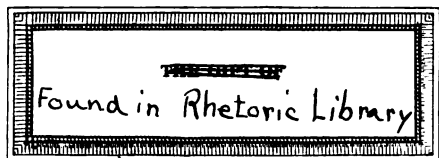
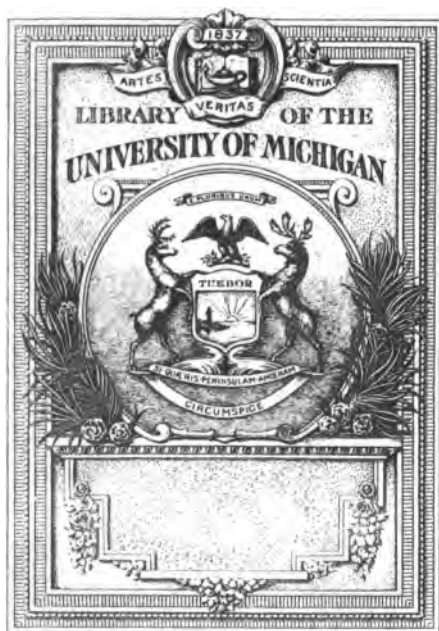
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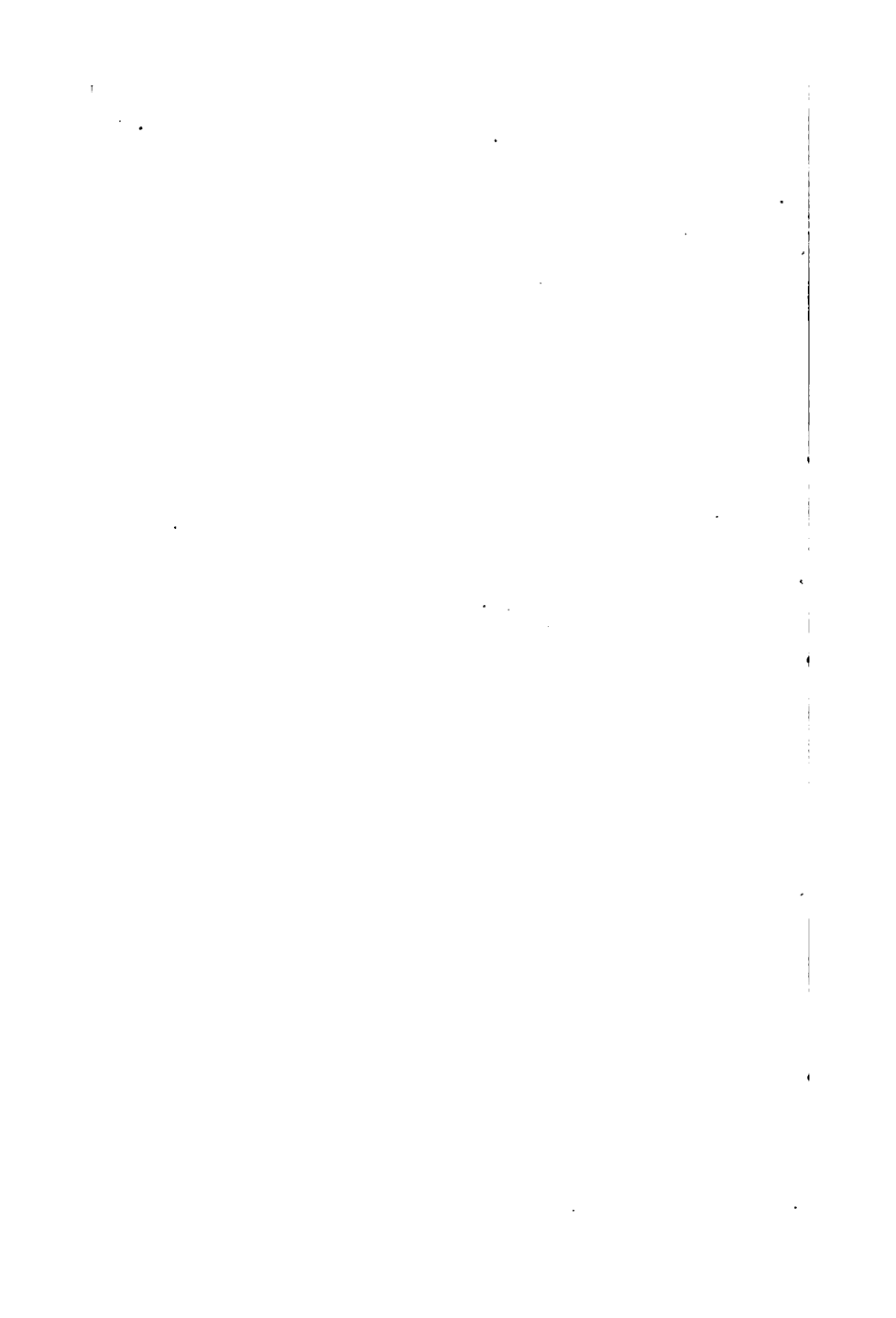
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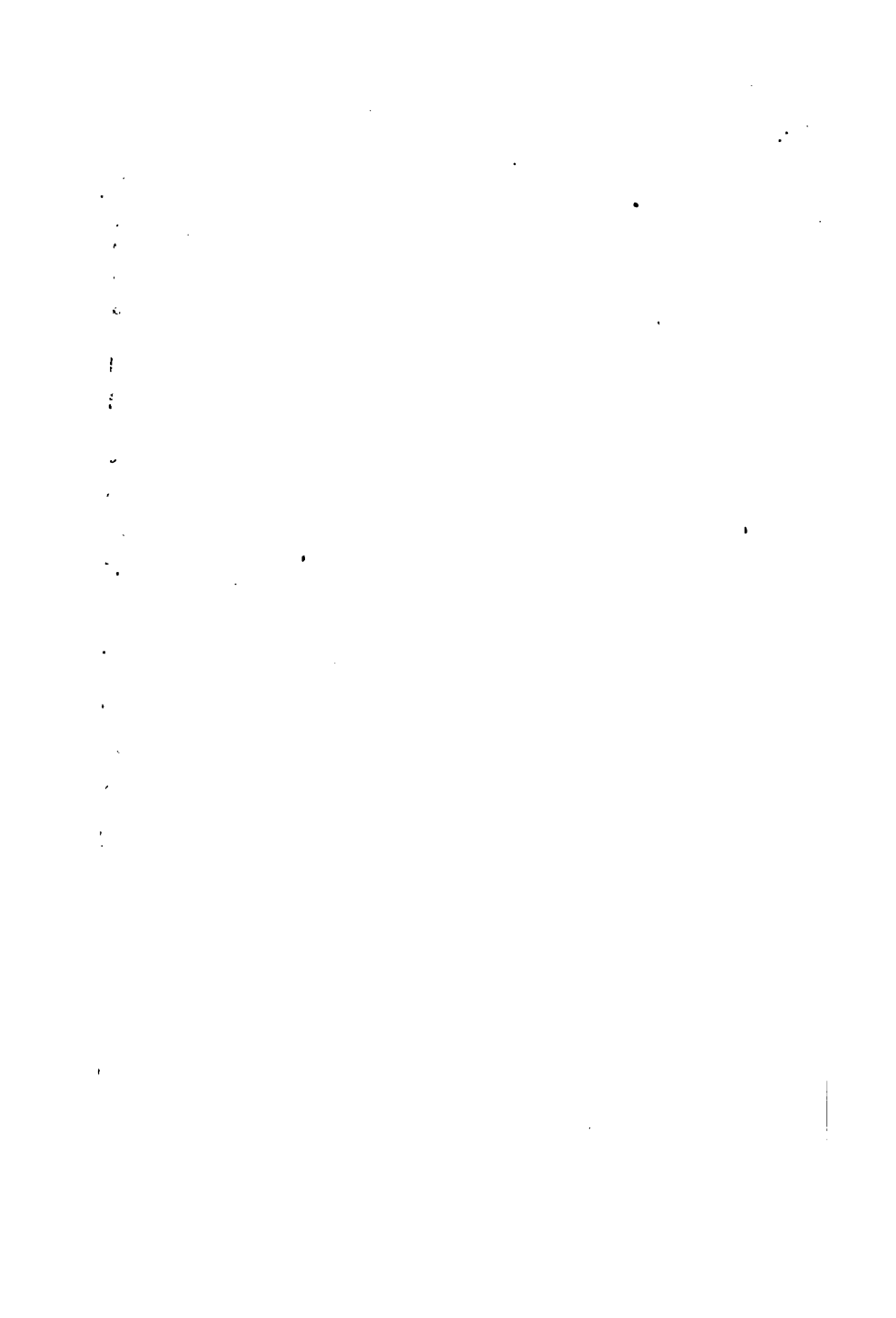




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Dwight Cowsey.





A Book of Dakota Rhymes

A Book
of
Dakota Rhymes

Collected and Arranged

BY

B. W. Burleigh

AND

G. G. Wenzlaff

FOURTH EDITION



MITCHELL, SOUTH DAKOTA
EDUCATOR SCHOOL SUPPLY COMPANY
MCMX

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AND
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TO
OUR ALMA MATER
THIS VOLUME
IS
AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED

Trans. from Rhet. 7-24-27 MKP

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PREFACE

The "Rhymes" comprising this little book have been gleaned from the farms and towns of South Dakota. New as is this state, there is a higher life in the breasts of even those who, far removed from the great centres of culture and the blessings of an older and more highly developed region, brave the hardships of pioneer life. These verses are an expression of that *higher* life that feels something *deeper* in nature and in the simple and often hard relations and conditions of western life. In making this collection—which has been possible only with the generous co-operation of the contributors—and sending it out in book-form, the compilers feel that they are helping to preserve and make known, in a greater measure, a few samples of the literary fruit of this commonwealth.

In all cases but one we have secured the verses for this book directly from the authors. Since, however, nearly all of the selections had previously appeared in print, we would make additional acknowledgment to periodicals that have given us permission to use them either directly or through the authors, and especially to "The Century Magazine," "The Progress," "The Midland Monthly," "Arthur's

PREFACE

New Home Magazine," "The Youth's Companion," "The Ave Maria," and "Four O'Clock."

So far as we are aware, there has been no previous attempt to make a collection that may fairly be called "A Book of Dakota Rhymes." If any line written herein shall add one tint more of color to the long summer afternoon, or one ray of warmth and cheer to the long winter evening, the compilers of this book will feel amply justified in sending it forth.

This, the second edition, differs but little from the first. Besides a few minor corrections and improvements in the text, the book has been enlarged by the addition of new material and another name to the list of contributors.

B. W. BURLEIGH

G. G. WENZLAFF.

YANKTON, S. DAK., December, 1898.

PREFACE TO THIRD EDITION

The former editions of DAKOTA RHYMES having been exhausted, the editors, in conformity with the demand, have prepared this *third edition*, incorporating considerable new material by writers not before represented.

B. W. BURLEIGH.

G. G. WENZLAFF.

YANKTON, S. DAK., January, 1907.

A Book of Dakota Rhymes

THE FAIR ISLANDS

I think there be fair islands in the seas.
 'Round their bright shores the emerald ocean
 flows,
And blushing lovers walk and woo in those.
I think there be unstoried Strophades;
And from their sunny sands no sailor flees,
 For there no harpies are, and there the rose
 Grows redder, and the lily whiter blows,
And often have I yearned to dwell in these.
But were I there, methinks, in little time,
 As I should wander by the silver strand,
 My heart would languish with a deeper pain,
A fiercer longing for that far-off clime,
 Where cattle strong do roam the prairie land,
 And waves the wheat o'er all the golden plain.

WILL DILLMAN

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

SPRING UPON THE PRAIRIE

A faint green tinging all the billowy plain,
Far-reaching space filled in with glad refrain
Of meadow-lark, and twittering blackbird notes,
And low love chirrups from the swallows'
throats—

Brown swallows that with swiftly dipping flight
Sweep close to earth, then seeking higher
light,

With trembling wings that beat the scented air,
Then darting back with quivering pinions
where

Beneath the eaves are nests secure and high,
Wherein the mother chirps a lullaby.

Some bending willows in a marshy spot
Show dimly green their new-born leaves half
shot [brush,

With dull brown coloring, traced by Autumn's
While at their feet grow blue flags rank and
lush;

Shy, sweet-faced daisies peep from dew-wet
spots—

Bright yellow blossoms shine like golden dots
Within a setting of soft buffalo grass;
A wild rose bramble in a tangled mass
Just putting forth its leaves; while everywhere
The dainty violets, April's children fair,
Lift up their faces toned in lightsome tints;
And as our feet press down the pungent mints
That grow along the winding river's brink—
Their odorous breaths sweep outward,—rise and
sink

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

Upon the air,—and where the shallows lie
The kildee wades and sounds his spring-time
cry.

A striped gopher poses still and straight,
Then, with defiant whistle, seeks his mate.
A gleam of scarlet as a blackbird tilts
Upon a willow, and pipes forth a lilt
Of rippling song from out his joyous heart.
So much of 'wakening nature forms a part
Of our glad prairie spring-time, fresh and
sweet—

With eager rapture we its coming greet.

MAY PHILLIPS TATRO

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

LIFE'S BEST GIFT

On the shore of the great unknown,
All tremblingly, I stood alone,
Waiting till Death should kindly come
To me, and claim me as his own.

But Death, unkind as Life, passed by,
Unheeding my despairing cry;
I could not lay my burden down;
Alas, for me! I could not die.

Then in my anguish, did I call,
"O Life! Since Death has taken all,
And left me in my bitter woe,
On me, I pray, let one gift fall."

And Life smiled back, "Not yet the end;
O patience, heart, and I will send
My first, most precious gift to thee."
The treasure came; it was a friend.

FLORA M. THORNTON SWIFT

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

IN THE SPRING-TIME

One name—when spring winds whisper softly—
I hear amidst the green boughs' leaves;
The creek's low song, the wild dove's crooning—
That name to me all nature breathes.

One face I see in every blossom,
That meekly hides within the grass;
The evening clouds in hues of sunset
Reflect that face before they pass.

One dream so vague, so dreamy vivid,
Like music of a sylvan stream,
Like fragrance from the prairie roses—
My loved one is my constant dream.

G. G. WENZLAFF

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

THE FORGOTTEN NEST

You who but yesterday, with untried wing,
A fledgling, left your home, the sheltered nest,
And pause to-night beneath strange skies to rest,
There with the morning sun to wake and sing:
Have you no hint of memory to bring
To you that little rounded home? Your breast
Will be no more within its confines pressed,
Nor will you there renew your twittering.
But lagging feet may find an easier way
Since you are pouring forth your happy song;
The dulcet strains within your limpid lay
May lift some tender heart above the throng.
So let me to that home my homage pay,
In which your wings for feathered flight grew
strong.

CHARLES BRACY LAWTON

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

ABOUT SUNRISE

The dew were like the seeds of glory,
The apple-leaves were glos'trin' waxed and
green,

The crickets grindin' out their squeaky story,
The roses blowin' red's you ever seen.

A redbreast were a-whistlin'
Down where the corn were glistenin'.

The jays were jabb'rin' over in the russet trees,
The saucy cats kept up their jawin' shrill,
A hummin'-bird was flick'rin' round amongst
the honey-bees,

And prairie-hens acrost the lot were rumblin'
like the mill.

Up in the apples' tallest peak,
All buttoned up, and trim and sleek,
And dandy as two fightin'-cocks,
There sot a pair of singin' mocks.

There's them thet thinks they never heard
Good music, 'ceptin' mockin'-bird
Performances, in wanin' spring;
I ain't the one what's got a word
Ag'in' it, if you care to hear them sing.

A tinklin'
Of silver bells,
Thet kind of tells
The play's begun.
A little din

Of sweetness first, before you get the run.
Then pretty pictures floats
Up from their throats,

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

Along with one
Of them old tunes so sweet
It seems as good to eat
As meller fruit.
And now a shoot
'Way up so high
You almost touch the sky.
A suddent turn thet makes you seem
A-loafin' in a dream,
Where you can see
The noddin' tree
Laze in its own
Cool shadders, thrown
To kiver lovers' bowers,
'Midst blushin' flowers
By flirtin' breezes blown,
Thet give a hint
Of bubblin' mint.
Now rollin' in the grinnin' grass,
You feel the honeyed air
Thet over bloomin' orchards pass
A-playin' in your hair;
A snoozin' so,
The wind begins to blow
As awkerdly as if there's room
To take and swing a cyclone-broom.
You hear the saplin's thrash,
The fallin' timber's crash,
The thunder's ugly growl,
Above the blizzard's howl;
And while you shiver,
Away they sliver,
And warm and bright

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

The soft sunlight
Comes flashin' out,
And 'fore you know
What makes your singer go,
You join the happy shout—
The song without the words—
Sung by the mockin'-birds.
I ain't got no ear for singin',
So I jest kep' on a-flingin'
Clods up in the apple-tree,
Until I couldn' nowhere see
A bird within a mile of me.

DOANE ROBINSON

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

WAITING

Span on, and on, O broad prairie land!
Span on to the stars with a sweep that is grand!
I stand on thy shore, O waterless sea,
Awaiting my loved one's return unto me.

"Farewell," and "Farewell,"—then one last
long embrace,
Ere I saw him embark on the limitless space.
Yet I stand and I wait by the waterless sea,
And long for my loved one's return unto me.

B. W. BURLEIGH

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

OUR PRAIRIE FLOWERS

When he this world had fashioned well
To be his children's home,
The Father came with us to dwell,
And in the floweret shone.

His spirit sought the farthest shore,
And left some token there
That might to us in buds it bore
Unfold a Father's care.

He gave arbutus to the grove,
The clover to the mead;
Where'er our wandering feet may rove
There blooms our nature's need.

To cheer the desert's lonely way
The bright acacia grows.
The lowly mosses' crimson ray
Lights up the Alpine snows.

But when he viewed our prairie land
No single flower could choose,
And so he strewed with loving hand
His choicest seeds profuse.

FRANK HERMON WENTWORTH

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

WHAT IS LIFE

A poet asked the question of a rose,
As one fair day drew lingering to a close.
Breathing the incense of her heart above
She answered blushing: "Life—ah, life is
love!"

A songbird from his deep embowered nest
Sang to the glories of the purpling west
A song of gladness, pure, without alloy.
The poet heard: "This life is only joy."

"And what say ye?"—this to the ants that low
Beside his feet on busy errands go.
A thousand-voiced reply from out the soil—
And myriads caught the echo: "Life is toil."

Into the twilight wood the poet strayed
And found within the solitude a maid;
Waiting a skiff approaching o'er the stream,
She murmured: "Life—oh, happy, happy
dream!"

Softly the darkness settles, and on high
Myriads of stars begem the dusky sky.
Faint whispers breathe 'twixt heaven and earth
and sea,
"Life is an everlasting mystery."

Now to the hermit's cave the wanderer hied.
He to the question wearily replied,
Sighing, as low his wavering taper burned:
"Life is a school where nothing can be learned."

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

The penitent—the midnight long since sped—
Upon the wayside stones reclined his head.
“How long,” he said, “how full of strife appears
The pilgrimage through this dim vale of tears!”

Celestial artists change from somber gray
To rainbow tints the curtains of the day,
Till at God's bidding these are upward rolled
And mortals view the morning's court of gold.

From each unfolding bud the shadows flee;
Earth echoes with a living melody,
And through the anthems of exulting birds
There thrills a voice—the poet hears the words:

“If even comes, O man, to find thee more
Like to the great Ideal than before;
If thou art nobler when this day is spent,
Then hast thou lived: life is development.”

ANNA E. BAGSTAD

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

A HAPPY HOUR

Away down on a forgotten page
Of a book of song, a withered flower
Lies as a last sweet heritage
Of a happy hour.

Long, long ago it was laid there. All
That remaineth now is the withered flower
And its memories that can recall
The happy hour.

The day lies dead in the long ago.
In the little book is the withered flower;
But where, ah, where did the dead love go
That happy hour?

CHARLES E. HOLMES

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

HUMANITY AND THE SEA

How like the sea, the wide expanse,
That beats against a thousand strands,
Breathing its husky monotone,
Uplifting high its spray-wet hands,

Is our humanity!

Like restless billows we raise our hearts,
To cry throughout pain's wildest night;
But o'er the waters of tossing years,
There seems to break no cheering light
On our humanity.

We yearn for happy, distant climes,
Where stately, green palmettoes wait,—
But still strive on. 'Tis well, ah, well
We yearn and strive, however late,
For our humanity.

While yet the voyage is before,
With no skilled seaman near at hand
To note the needle's turning there,
We sail far toward the sunset land,
From our humanity.

But high above the flood there shines
A golden star, to mark the track
And shape our course. And on before
A Pilot waits. Would we come back
To wear humanity?

Would we return when once He greets?
Or murmur at the kind decree?
At death and our lone journeying,
When on that summer shore we 're free
From our humanity?

WILL P. CHAMBERLAIN

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

SOWING AND REAPING

When we sow, we sow in faith,
For the seed must buried lie
Many days before we see
Signs of harvest by and by.

When we plant, we plant in faith,
For the growth of trees is slow.
Many summers must we wait
For the perfect fruit to grow.

When we pray, pray we in faith,
As we sow and plant and trust,
Never doubting while we wait,
That our God is faithful, just?

Or do we in doubt and fear
Murmur at the long delay?
Mourn because we have to wait?
Cry that God has turned away?

Say we will not sow, because
Harvests yield not on the morn?
Say we will not pray because
Patient hope brings oft but scorn?

Better both to sow and pray;
And in strongest faith believing,
We shall some not distant day
Know the blessing of receiving.

FANNIE E. KNAPP

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

APRIL

A smile, a tear,
Sunshine an hour;
A skurry of clouds,
A little shower;
A robin's chirrup,
A blackbird's call,
Sunlight and shadow
Over all.

A violet face
Just peeping up;
A dandelion,
A buttercup;
A dainty green
Flung everywhere,
A tuft of clover
Here and there.

A meadow-lark's
Sweet, soaring lay,
Some new life showing
Every day;
A whirl of wind,
So damp and sweet
A swish of rain—
April complete.

MAY PHILLIPS TATRO

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

LOVE SONG

Dearest, I had thought to bring
Honor to you when I came,
Not the loud and brazen ring,
Not the sound of stilted fame,
But a known and honored name
From the notes that I should sing.

Tow'rds an end that never nears,
I have trodden toilsome ways;
And at eve the rising tears,
And at morn the longing gaze;
And the hours have turned to days,
And the days are come to years.

After bootless journeying
I am come your hand to claim.
Nothing but myself I bring.
I have sought an honored name;
I have sung for modest fame,
But they would not hear me sing.

Yet I know in your dear eyes,
Though I come with bayless brow,
I am welcome. Then arise;
Let it go, I care not how.
Poor hearts, dearest, long ere now,
Loved and quickened in this wise.

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

Under far and bending skies
We will journey on the same,
Where the wood-birds sing and rise,
Where the roses bud and flame.
Let them keep their wealth and fame;
They may never know this prize.

WILL DILLMAN

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

APRIL

The robins have come back again,
The meadow-larks are here,
And bashful little wind-flowers
In every nook appear.
The frogs have been thawed out three times,
They now are "in the swim,"
And wake the evening echoes
With their old accustomed vim.

The sun shines bright at nine o'clock,
High winds prevail at noon,
Then on the roof the raindrops play
Ere night, a merry tune.
From out the dingy last year's growth
Young grass begins to peep,
And soon the prairies' emerald slopes
Will swarm with frisking sheep.

There's health and strength and deep content
In every breath we draw.
Fresh life and vigor come with spring,
For this is nature's law.
Though ears and toes have long been cold,
Yet now with joy we sing:
"'Tis worth the whole of winter time
To get a taste of spring."

MORTIMER C. BROWN

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

PLOWIN'

I ruther plow 'n anything.
Jest give to me
A pair o' five-year-olds
'At's smart,
'N' let me sling
A steel-beam plow 'at holds
Its edge, 'n' has good suck,
'N' I don't want no better luck.
It best suits me
To git 'n airly start
On eighty-acre bouts,
'N' w'ile the lazy louts
In town
Air groomin' theirselves down,
To crack my whip 'n' sing:

 "Rockaby baby on the tree-top,
 When the wind blows the cradle will rock,
 When the bough breaks the cradle will fall,
 'N down will come baby, cradle, 'n' all."

Take it October days,
W'en corn is ripe;
'N' sunshine, kind o' red,
Pokes through the smoky haze;
'N' plover 'n' silver snipe
Pick up the angle worms
'At twists 'n' squirms
Erlong the furrer's bed;
'N' lazy cattle graze
Erbout the stubble lot,
Wher' little's to be got

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

But frost-bit volunteer—
I trot betwixt the tails
With independent swing
'N' hope 'at never fails,
Expectin' soon to hear
The dinner-tocsin's ring;
'N' so I laugh 'n' sing:

“Heigh-diddle-diddle, the cat played the
fiddle,
The cow jumped over the moon,
The little dog laughed to see such sport,
'N' the dish ran after the spoon.”

Give me a good-hung plow
'At sets down flat,
'N' picks right up the dirt,
'N' turns it top-side down.
I tell ye now,
I'll bet a las' year's hat
'At you can't hurt
My feelin's no sech way.
Jest let me plow,
'N' turn the stubble down,
'N' smell the rottin' dirt,
'N' bust the gopher moun's
On eighty-acre roun's.
Ther' ain't no job in town
I'd trade it fer;
No, sir.
Three acres ever' day
Es 'bout the reg'lar thing;
'N' 'long erbout sundown
You'll hear me laugh 'n' sing:

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

"Chunks o' cold pudding 'n' pieces o' pie,
Chunks o' cold pudding 'n' pieces o' pie,
My ma said she'd give me,
My ma said she'd give me,
My ma said she'd give me,
If I wouldn' cry."

DOANE ROBINSON

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

CONSISTENCY

Reproach me not, though it appear,
While I true doctrines teach,
I wholly fail in my career
To practice as I preach.

Yon guide-post has through countless days
"To London" pointed on,
Nor once has quit the angled ways
And up to London gone.

DOANE ROBINSON

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

GRANDMA

My old Grandma used to say
Always to us children, "Hey?"
Dear old soul, she could not hear
Till we shouted in her ear.
Sometimes when the dog would bark,
Grandma dear would say, "Hush, hark!"
Sometimes when the cat would play,
Grandma dear would answer, "Hey?"

I can see her sitting there,
Knitting in her rocking chair.
How we children thought it fun,
Yelling by her side, to run,
Hiding from her poor dim sight,
Ere she got half through her fright!
How we teased her every day,
Laughing at her quaint old "Hey?"

But when stripped all off for bed,
And our evening prayer was said,
We would never think of fear
While Grandma was sitting near;
But if she would take the light
For a moment out of sight,
We were glad to hear her say
From some distant corner, "Hey?"

Many winters now have fled
Since she watched beside my bed;
Many summers passed away
Since I've heard her answer, "Hey?"

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

Calmly rests her silv'ry head
In the city of the dead,
But I'd give the world today
Just to hear her answer, "Hey?"

B. W. BURLEIGH

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

THE WOODLAND PATH

Through the clover, red and sweet,
Straggling through a field of wheat,
Down across the pasture lot
Where the dandelions dot
With their golden gleaming tint;
Through the brooklet's lush spearmint,
And the bushes by the ditch
Where we cut our hazel switch,
Winding through the orchard trees
Where the droning bumblebees
Swagger by on lazy wings;
Under drooping elm, where swings
Cunningly the hang-bird's nest,
Wherein, cradled 'neath her breast,
Wee ones rock with every sigh
Of the breeze that passes by.
Now along the brookside's brink,
Where the cattle splash and drink;
Through rank bunches of blue flag
Where the children loiter, lag,
When from school they homeward turn,
Walking deep through mint and fern;
Then a zigzag way it takes,
On through mandrake, slough and brakes,
Over fallen logs it leads,
Bramble bush and bending reeds,
Into deeper, darker shade,
Mossy dell and flower-strewn glade;
Climbs a fence with broken rail,

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

Through the corn field where the quail
Pipes his cry of, "Wet, more wet!"
On it goes, until we let
Down the barnyard bars, and go
Up the lane,—how well we know
What dear spot the ending hath
Of this old-time, woodland path.

MAY PHILLIPS TATRO

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

THE DIFFERENCE

Sweet, merry Maud and sober Kate
Together question future fate.
Each turns her cup just three times three,
Then looks within, her fate to see.

"I see a ring," Maud laughing cries,
"And I a cross," Kate quick replies.
"A letter, too," said Maud, "I see,
And a bird to bring it straight to me."

"I see," said Kate, "a dreary road,
And bear thereon my heavy load;
It runs through all the coming years,
And life is fraught with bitter tears."

And thus each heart the future sees;
Through smiles look those, through tears look
these;
The tears will make the weary way;
The smiles light up the darkest day.

FLORA M. THORNTON SWIFT

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

MIGNON

Know'st thou the land where citrons grow,
Where dark leaves hide the orange glow,
Where soft winds wander from the sky
O'er myrtles still and laurels high,
Know'st thou that land?

Then thither flee;

I would, my loved one, go with thee.

Know'st thou the house whose columns loom,
And shines its hall and garnished room?
Its marble busts stand mute and mild;
Ask what betides thy wandering child.
Know'st thou this home?

Then thither flee;

I would, my guardian, go with thee.

Know'st thou the mountain's misty spray,
Where 'mid the clouds the mules seek way?
There dragons haunt the caves for blood.
O'er rocky steep pours down the flood.
Know'st thou this way?

Then thither flee;

O father, lead, I'll go with thee!

Translated from Goethe.

FRANK HERMON WENTWORTH

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

A SOUTH SEA ABSURDITY

I'm a Borrioboo from Woolloomoolloo,
And a king of the Friendly Isles;
I'm the owner in chief of a coral reef,
Where a mermaid sits and smiles—
Where a mermaid sits and smiles on me
As she combs her dark green locks
And nibbles the seed of the salt seaweed
Which clings to the polypous rocks.

I have been to sea with a manatee
On the back of a big, black whale;
I have warbled a song with a young dugong,
Who was taking a little sail—
Who was taking a little sail with me
In the South Pacific seas.
But we both had a cough and soon left off
When the whale began to sneeze.

I have played fantan with a Chinaman,
Who swam ashore from his junk;
O he looked very blue when I won his cue,
And went on a horrible drunk—
And went on a horrible, howling drunk,
Because of his sad, sad loss.
But we put him in jail to weep and wail
And pray to his Chinese joss.

I have hobnobbed, too, with a cannibal crew
And sampled their humble fare;
O a richer dish than any fried fish
Was some missionary, rare—
Was some missionary, rarely cooked,

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

Served up on a wooden skewer.

He was done to a fault and with pepper and
salt

Was fit for an epicure.

I have played leap-frog with the pert sea hog
On the top of the bounding wave ;

I have straddled a spar with a shipwrecked tar,
Till he sank to his deep-sea grave—

Till he sank to his deep-sea grave below,
Where the sea-ghouls lay in wait

And shrieked with glee at their banquet free
As they dined off the captain's mate.

I have sat in the shade with a young mermaid,
As she fanned herself with her tail ;

I have heard her sigh when I swore to die
If my love should ever fail—

If my love should ever fail for her,
My queen of the tropical seas ;

Then I stole a kiss from this mythical miss
As I gave her fin a squeeze.

But away she ran with a gay merman,
Who brought her a fine-tooth comb ;

It was mother-of-pearl and it caught my girl,
For she left my house and home—

For she left my house and she left me, too,
Alone on this coral reef,

And I sit and moan in an undertone,
For I'm overcome with grief.

SAM T. CLOVER

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

MAY

Month of flowers! We smile to see
Warmth and light return with thee;
Trees that leafless were and sere,
Now in emerald robes appear;
Birds we missed the winter long,
Trill thy praise in joyous song.
From the carpet of the grass
Nodding at us as we pass,
Flowers we oft have known before,
Smile upon us as of yore.
Overhead the skies are blue
E'en as when the earth was new;
White above the swaying tree
Fleecy clouds float lazily;
All things cold and dead appear
Quickened, as thy steps draw near,
From the dullness of the tomb
Into sudden life and bloom.
And into the hearts of men
Creeps the warmth of youth again
Calling back the blossoms fair
Crowded out by toil and care.
All the joys of other years,
Shrouded by a mist of tears
Brightly o'er our memories play
At the coming of the May.

MORTIMER C. BROWN

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

BACK ON THE FARM AGAIN

I tell you what, fer all I try,
I keep a gettin' mighty dry
O' bein' all shet in.
I'd like to give my eyes a spree,
By drinkin' in all I could see,
Back on the farm agin;
Do up the chores out in the barn,
Come in an' hold old Granny's yarn
Beside the fire at night.
In that old house, beside the h'arth,
Thar lies the centre of the 'arth,
Or I ain't nowheres right.

In summer time go out a spell,
An' take a drink down at the well,—
Then hear the blackbirds sing.
Go out among the willer trees,
An' take a sniff of that er breeze,—
An' hear them cowbells ring.
Jest look out in that field of grain,
That's growed betwixt sunshine an' rain!
An' lookey thar! Each row
Of that er corn that you kin see,
Is most as tall as you or me,—
An' jest see how they grow!

Look at them men thar stowin' 'way
The barn loft full o' bran new hay,—
An' smell that clover thar!
It can't be chained down on the ground,
But grows right up an' floats around,
A waftin' everywhar,

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

An' see old Brindle strollin' 'long,
A bell'rin' out her evenin' song,
 An 'switching round her tail.
An' when the shadders turn it cool,
The girl with her old three-legged stool,
 Goes singin' with her pail.

Then arter all the chores is done,
An' crickets and their like begun
 To sing their evenin' song;
The hosses an' the stock is fed,
The calves an' sheep is in their shed,
 All jest whar they belong;—
It makes a feller feel all right
To settle down an' watch the night
 A crowdin' out the day.
O them's the scenes that make you glad,
An' them's the scenes that make you sad,
 When they're all passed away.

I tell you what, fer all I try,
I keep a gettin' mighty dry
 O' bein' all shet in.
I'd like to give my eyes a spree,
By drinkin' in all I could see,
 Back on the farm agin.
I don't like this er city noise,
O' crowded streets an' yellin' boys,—
 To me it hain't no charm!
An' when I leave this world o' sand,
An' get up in the better land,
 I want to run a farm.

B. W. BURLEIGH

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

A FRAGMENT

Daylight that came upon the hills of Rome—
Looking upon the city's majesty
And on the country's loveliness without,—
Saw hanging, pierced and bleeding on the cross
A dying saint; the first pale sun-ray smiled
On youthful Julia's face where agony
Since yesternoon had held its cruel sway;
Beamed on the form that once had burned with
 life,
And burned with love for one that hung before
Upon the cross; and for this love she died.

A Roman youth returning from a scene
Of nightly revel, wandering o'er the hills
To cool his heated brow—where rested still
The wild voluptuary's laurel crown—
Found himself face to face with her that hung
Upon the cross. No more her countenance
Bore trace of pain. The spirit as it rose
To him she loved and died for, left a look
Of triumph, holiness and joy and peace.
And the young Roman gazed upon the face
In its transfigured beauty till there rose
Within his soul a high and holy fear,
Thoughts of unknown and of eternal things—
And underneath the pierced and bleeding feet
In reverence he laid his withered crown.

O holy Truth, the morning surely comes
When Error, issuing from his nightly haunt,
Crowned from the revel meets thee face to face.

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

He finds thee bleeding, dying, crucified
And yet immortal. And thou shalt not be
As some crushed martyr, but a conqueror,
Through suffering made strong and sanctified.
And when the glory of the dawning day
Shines on thy face, God's fear shall smite his
heart
And he shall lay his laurels at thy feet.

ANNA E. BAGSTAD

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

THE BAD LANDS

A stillness sleeps on the broken plain,
And the sun beats down, with a fiery rain,
On the crust that covers the sand that is rife
With the bleaching bones of the old-world life.

'Tis a sea of sand, and over the waves
Are the wind-blown tops of the Cyclops' caves;
And the mountain-sheep and the antelopes
Graze cautiously over the sun-burnt slopes.

And here in the sport of the wild wind's play
A thousand years are as yesterday,
And a million more in these barren lands
Have run themselves in the shifting sands.

Oh, the struggle and strife and the passion and
pain
Since the bones lay bleached on the sandy plain,
And a stillness fell on the shifting sea,
And a silence that tells of eternity!

CHARLES E. HOLMES

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

DEAR LITTLE FACE

Dear little face, so full of trust
That now is all believing;
Dear little face, that some day must
Find life filled with deceiving;
Dear little face, that draws to mine,
Nor dreams of dreaded danger,
Would I could keep you to the end
To disappointment stranger!

Dear little face, that asks to know
The mystery of living;
Dear little face, that years will show
That life was made for giving;
Dear little face, where lines will grow
And deepen with life's sadness,
Would I could keep you from the low
Replacing grief with gladness!

Dear little face, how can you meet
A world, strong men defying?
Dear little one, why must you hear
The sorrowing and crying?
Dear little face—I dare not dream
But, praying here above you,
I draw you closer in my arms—
God knows how well I love you!

CHARLES BRACY LAWTON

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

MORNING

'Tis sweet to live!

With eager eyes to greet the coming morn;
With throbbing heart to see the god of day
Arise, in majesty and might arrayed;
While o'er the earth and sea and sky he flings
A robe of royal splendor radiant,
Bedecked with gleam of gold and glist'ring gems.

'Tis joy to live!

'Tis sweet to live!

To drink deep draughts of Nature's magic spell
From dewy flowers' blushing grace and all
The loveliness of hill and field and dale,
Of winding stream and forest's mazy depths,
Wherein the gladsome strains of birds entrance
The brooding spirit's inmost consciousness.

'Tis joy to live!

'Tis sweet to live!

To share in all the simple, soothing joys
Of daily human life,—repose from toil;
The sight of childhood's innocence, untaught
Of care or worldly thought; the bond, so strong,
That joineth friends; the love of maid or wife,
Unbought by wealth or fame, the heart's glad
gift.

'Tis joy to live!

'Tis sweet to live!

To feel the heart aglow with pride in all
Our country's might and fame; with ardent eye

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

To scan the roll prolonged of sons in whom
She most doth joy; to know that in her broad
Domain nor wealth nor blood, but only claim
Of manhood's worth hath honor's title-deed.

'Tis joy to live!

'Tis sweet to live!

To wander glad amid the treasure-halls
Of Truth; to mark her glitt'ring stores, the
spoils

Hard-won of sages' quest; the while her lamp
Dispels the gloom of ancient night, and all
The horrid shapes that lurk therein depart,
Affrighted at the light that is their death.

'Tis joy to live!

'Tis sweet to live!

To thrill beneath the touch of Beauty's wand,
As in the breathing marble we behold
The artist's dream, divinely fair, or on
The glowing canvas spread, or list entranced
To Music's magic strain, or Poesy's
Dear song of love or hero's deed or doom.

'Tis joy to live!

'Tis sweet to live!

To feel in all the ministries of life
The bond that binds us fast to fellow-man
In one great brotherhood; whereof the source
And head is He, the Everlasting One,
Whose arm upholdeth all; and though full well
I know the darkness draweth on apace,

'Tis joy to live!

W. J. McMURTRY

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

EVENING .

'Tis sad to live!

With weary eyes to note the gath'ring gloom;
With heavy heart to bid the dying day
Farewell; and then, forlorn, bereft of light
And joy, to see the veil of darkness fall,
In somber folds, o'er all fair Nature's face,
In dismal pall enshrouding every charm.

'Tis grief to live!

'Tis sad to live!

To hearken to the night-wind's moan and wail;
To see the lightning's glare quick flashing o'er
The murky sky; while straight the thunder's
crash

Doth herald loud and long the tempest's wild
Advance; to know that in yon wood the beasts
Are prowling fierce, to seize upon their prey.

'Tis grief to live!

'Tis sad to live!

A part to take in all the heritage
Of woe that unto man pertaineth,—toil
That hath no end; the vision, drear and dread,
Of children doomed, ere yet the light their eyes
Doth greet, to sin and shame; the bitter cry
Of those who mourn the dear ones gone from
sight.

'Tis grief to live!

'Tis sad to live!

To note how far beneath the mark of her
High destiny our native land doth aim,

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

Content, in place of Freedom's grandest shrine,
To rear a massive mart of trade, wherein
Hersons may sell their souls for gold, their eyes
Too dim and blind to see life's richest gains.

'Tis grief to live!

'Tis sad to live!

To listen, sore perplexed, to angry strife
Of philosophic sects, too soon to learn
That round about the little life of man
Extendeth one vast realm of gloom, wherein
Truth's vaunted lamp is but a tiny spark,
That serveth best to show the darkness drear.

'Tis grief to live!

'Tis sad to live!

To feel the soul, all sensitive to sweet,
Concordant sights and sounds, assailed and
vexed

Most bitterly by Discord's hateful rout;
To mark how, out of Beauty's charm, a snare
Is made for men, whereby, through pride of life
And Luxury's deceit and bane, they fall.

'Tis grief to live!

'Tis sad to live!

To see the strong press hard the weak; to note
How outward form and creed usurp the place
Of heart and deed; and though the eye of Faith,
Undimmed, may catch a gleam of clearer light,
Of brighter day, in far-off earthly years
Or life beyond the tomb, yet now and here

'Tis grief to live!

W. J. McMURTRY

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

THE GEM OF THE PRAIRIE

Far down by the stream on a May day fair,
Beside the clear water that ripples and flows,
You will find a treasure of beauty rare,—
In the gem of our Westland, the sweet wild
rose.

Upon the prairie in sunny June,
Wherever the roving summer wind goes,
It bears on its wings the faint perfume
Of the gem of the prairies, the sweet wild
rose.

And all through the summer hot and dry,
O'er the shadeless plain the sunshine glows;
While other flowers wither and die,
Blooms the gem of our prairies, the sweet
wild rose.

O hail to the flower that brightens our home!
O hail! In profusion it everywhere grows.
And still in my heart wherever I roam
Lives the gem of the prairie, the sweet wild
rose.

FANNIE E. KNAPP

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

THE ECHO

I dreamed to rest again
Before my father's door,
And there with joy looked down
The old-time vale once more.

The breeze with gentle play
Sighs through the spring-blown buds,
And over head and breast
The flowers come down in floods.

When I awake, the moon
On forest border shines.
The yellow light around
A foreign land outlines.

And as I gaze about
For flowers, there's ice instead,
The land with snow is decked,
White hairs are on my head.

Translated from Eichendorff.

FRANK HERMON WENTWORTH

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

THE BLIND PIPER

Good piper of the Spree,
Why pipe so mournfully
When brightly smiles the summer day,
And sunbeams on the river's way
Are dancing lightly to and fro
And casting glances from below,
Caressing warm the bridge's span,
While zephyrs cool your temples fan?—
A mist is gath'ring in my eye,—
Good piper, I must hasten by.

Ah! piper of the Spree,
Why pipe so merrily
When lowering clouds are sailing fast,
The swallow, too, is hast'ning past
And scowling looks the rushing tide,
Upon whose crest the foam doth ride,
And whips the bridge's pillar-stays?
How merrily sound your oaten lays!

I can, thus drawn, not hasten by—
But what! is blind my piper's eye?

G. G. WENZLAFF

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

FARMIN' IN DAKOTA

When old Winter gets his back broke an' begins
ter lose his grip,
An' the north end of airth's axle toward the
sun begins ter tip;
When the butter-ducks go whizzin' to their
summer feedin' grounds,
An' the medder-lark salutes us with the old
familiar sounds;
When the grass begins ter nestle at the news
the breezes bring,
An' the prairie all around us wakens at the
touch o' Spring,
O, it's then I like ter hustle, when the day
begins ter crack,
An' go farmin' in Dakota,—when the birds
come back.

In the hush of airly mornin', when the stars are
still in sight,
An' the fleecy mists sail upward in the dim,
uncertain light,
Every sound that breaks the quiet seems ter
let a feller know
That the seed-time is a-comin' an' it's time
ter make things go.
The honk o' north-bound ganders comes
a-floatin' from the blue,
An' the grouse fill in the chorus with a lusty
"bim-bum-boo!"
An' the bullfrogs tease a feller, with their
everlastin' clack,

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

To go farmin' in Dakota,—when the birds
come back.

When the pussies on the willers er a-swellin' fit
ter bust,

An' th' win' flowers poke their bunnits through
the hillock's dingy crust;

When the smell o' burnin' strawstacks is
a-floatin' in the air,

An' the prairie fire its beacons is a-lightin'
everywhere;

Then the instinct prods a feller ter prepare fer
time o' need,

An' he longs ter tear the ground up an' fling
wide the golden seed;

So he hooks his team tergether, o'er his
shoulder slings a sack,

An' goes farmin' in Dakota,—when the birds
come back.

In the winter time a feller kinder seems ter lose
his hold,

An' his blood gits thick an' sluggish, till he 'lows
he's gettin' old.

He'll poke round among his cattle, from the
haystack to the barn,

With a feelin' that he'd kinder like ter jump
the whole consarn;

But when his lazy nostrils git a sniff o' comin'
spring,

An' his eyes light on the shadder of a wild goose
on the wing,

O, it sets his blood a-prancin', an' he longs
ter leave his shack

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

An' go farmin' in Dakota,—when the birds
come back.

O, the independent feelin' ev'ry pioneer hez
known,

When he sets his plow a-diggin' in the ground
that's all his own!

'Tis the key ter Nature's store-house, all her
treasures ter unfold,

An' the man that keeps it punchin' never fails
ter git the gold;

So while many er a-kickin' at the way the world
is run,

I'll plod onward in the furrow, through the
shadder an' the sun,

Quite content ter trust the Giver, at whose
hand we never lack,

An' keep farmin' in Dakota,—when the birds
come back.

MORTIMER C. BROWN

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

LIBERTY

Thou goddess of the gleaming brow and lustrous
eyes,
Whose form erstwhile was fettered and
enthralled, thy free
And lofty spirit cowed and mocked by tyrant's
might,
By haughty pride of place and power, 'tis now
thy day
Of triumph and of joy. Lo, at thy chariot wheel
Abased, enchained, are dragged thy cruel lords
of days
Gone by,—Oppression void of ruth and Slavery,
His child. And round about thine onward
course, with joy
O'erpassing every bound, with thunderous
acclaim,
The peoples throng, and heap their benedic-
tions on
Thy head. And yet, thou beauteous one, e'en
in this
Thy day of victory, I fear for thee. The lash,
The dungeon, well thou could'st endure,—they
made thee strong.
But sterner test thou now must meet,—to guide
thy feet
Aright in lofty place of pow'r; to turn thine
eye
In blazing wrath aloof from Flattery's deceit;
To grant thy queenly grace to none but those
whose hands

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

Are clean, to none but those whose hearts are
set on truth;
To cherish all that giveth life of man its worth
And joy. If so thou rul'st, thy sway shall know
no end.

W. J. McMURTRY

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

IRON NATION

Iron Nation was alone,
The lodge was far away.
Mountains intervened. The day
Was nearly done.
The evening star hung low,
And breath of even thrilled the air;
The coyote shambled from his lair,
Lapping in thirst the crusted snow.

Iron Nation drew his blanket close,
And thought of that rough trail
That led o'er the Divide; and pale—
If pallor ever comes to red man—
His swarthy countenance became. Hark!
Was it some bird of night
That whispered from the height:
Haste thee, thy soul embark!

Then welled in murmurous tones—
Undertones—no words convey
Life's parting symphony
Like forest moans:
'Last of all my race,
Now I depart. The camp
Is blazing there; here 'tis damp
And chill. The frost is on my face.

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

"Hail! Happy Hunting Grounds!
Thy rivers teem with fish
And in the chase, the wish
Of youth shall be redeemed. Sounds,
As from a pleasant summer's keep,
Are breaking; but the trail is dim,
The wigwam is afar. The moon's pale
rim
Hangs low behind the woods. I fall—I
sleep!"

WILL P. CHAMBERLAIN

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

LITTLE RED ROSE

O Rose, my Rose, my little red Rose,
Where art thou playing to-day?
What love, what charm, what sweetened repose
Could keep thee so long away?
I watch the fire as it burns at night,
With sparks dancing glad with glee;
I see it pale to ashes white,—
'Twas so, little Rose, with thee.

O Rose, my Rose, my little red Rose,
The butterfly lingers nigh,
With sunbeam kisses upon its wings,
Waiting for thee to pass by.
The wren sings sweetly her pretty song,
The breast of the robin glows,
The crickets chant, "Why tarry so long,
O dear little playmate, red Rose?"

O Rose, my Rose, my little red Rose,
It seems 'twas but yesterday,
Where the bluebell by the violet grows,
I saw thee running to play.
But angels that gave thy dimples birth
Again kissed thy cheek:—God knows
Why there is pain and sorrow on earth,
My dear little, sweet little Rose.

B. W. BURLEIGH

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

DECORATION DAY ON THE LITTLE BIG HORN

In column of fours the troopers ride,
Out from the post while the day is young;
Veteran troopers, scarred and tried—
And the story of Custer is on each tongue.

Over the alkali trail they trot,
Breathing a sigh for the fallen brave;
Eyes affixed on the fated spot
Where numberless heroes found a grave.

Past the blanketed, crafty Crows,
Looking askance with their beady eyes;
Steadily onward the column goes
Up to the ridge where Crittenden lies.

Up to the top of Monument Hill
In column of twos the troopers pass;
High on the bluff where all is still
And white stones nest in the buffalo grass.

The echoing bugle thrills the air
And far o'er the Little Big Horn floats;
Dying away in a fitful blare
With its ever-receding eerie notes.

Over the trail that Custer trod
March the troopers with reverent tread;
Every step is on blood-bought sod—
Bought with the lives of the valiant dead.

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

Just as they fell before the Sioux
Under the headstones white they lie;
Glistening marbles in constant view
Mutely proclaiming how heroes die.

Shoulder to shoulder, back to back,
Yates and Keogh and Calhoun fought;
Off to the center the carbine's crack
Told of the havoc that Harrington wrought.

Far to the left a speck of white
Tells of a trooper's desperate stand;
Tells of his gallant, hopeless fight
Right in the heart of that murderous band.

"This is the spot where Custer fell!"
Off with your hats, men, as you pass.
God! What a savage, exultant yell
Rose when he lay on that blood-stained grass.

Sprinkle the soil with manly tears,
Weep for the heroes who died that day;
Here on this spot a country rears
Tributes of love to the lifeless clay.

Over each headstone hang a wreath,
Weeds and the tangled briars efface;
Mutter a prayer for the soul beneath—
Death such as theirs is a saving grace.

Never a moment had they to rest,
Never a priest was present to shrive;
Fighting they fell on the slippery crest,
And never a trooper was left alive.

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

Children have blossomed to men's estate,
Mothers and sweethearts have passed away,
Since Custer's regiment met its fate
Here on the heights that midsummer day.

Comrades, attention! the trumpeter calls—
Ah! what a vision is this one sees;
Over their frailties charity falls—
Christ, have mercy on such as these.

SAM T. CLOVER

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

MORNING IN GALILEE

'Tis morning over Lake Gennesaret.
The mist clouds, from the valley fountains
sucked
By night's wood hewing, water drawing slaves,
To feed their drowsy master's vapor bath,
Still hang on Tabor's and Gadara's crests,
And drink the blue smoke curling idly up
From newly kindled breakfast fires in all
The nine proud cities of the mimic sea;
The towers of Magdal meet the capital
Of new Tiberias on the placid face
Of Chinnereth's blue looking-glass.
A great Damaskan merchant's caravan,
To Cairo bent, passing the parted night
At Khan Minyeh in white Capernaum,
Now early breaks its rest and stretches down
The western shore from Magdal to the Baths.
A fisher's boat deep laden with the fruit
Of one unwonted fortune-favored draught,
Floats to Bethsaida, and the happy song
The prospered fishers sing, ripples and throbs
The lucent air in waves of harmony.
And lo the sun! the great, round yellow sun,
Breaks full above Peraea's tomb-strawn hills,
And Jordan's vale o'erflows with floods of gold,
And Chinnereth's blue is brewed to whitest
wine
Bestowed within a flower-rimmed amber vase.
Far up the brooklet's winding course,
Clear painted on the unsubstantial haze,
A city stands, with walls and sentried tower.

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

Too great it seems, this city mirage-built,
To fade before the first fair morning breeze,
But as it falls, so soon shall you go down,
Capernaum, Tiberias, Magdal,
And you Chorazin and Bethsaida strong.
A little space, an hour, a day, no more
In time's account, and learned men will come
Saying, "'Twas surely here or here about."
But looking up the brooklet's winding course,
When the great sun breaks o'er Peraea's hills,
Clear painted on the unsubstantial haze,
Will stand the town with sentried walls and
tower.
Which then the greater, stronger, best?
Which then the work of men? Which mirage-
built?

DOANE ROBINSON

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

THE MOODS

I conned a poet's book from page to page,
And marked the many moods in which he
sung.

And some were early songs, and bold, and
rung

Of love and wine, and passions, and the rage
Of his wild, violent heart. And some the sage,
Man-grown, had writ; and here, it seemed,
the tongue

Of mighty genius, free and curbless, flung
Its priceless thoughts to men. But in old age,
In the calm autumn, free from pang or pain,

O, then his songs were sweetest to the ear;
He sang of sunsets in the golden west,
Of yellow harvest moons, and gathered grain,
Of heaven, and the hour we tarry here;—
I loved the tranquil songs of age the best.

WILL DILLMAN

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

LADDIE

From on the mountain's height each day,
I look far out upon the bay
That leads unto the restless sea,
The sea that holds my heart from me.

'Twas on a summer's afternoon.
The sun was red as harvest moon.
'Mid sails as white as flowers of May,
I saw my Laddie borne away.

And as the dreary years roll by,
I wonder if the time is nigh
When Laddie will come back to me,
My Laddie on the restless sea.

Tho' skies be dark, tho' skies be blue.
I know my Laddie's love is true.
I'll trust the heart that said to me,
"Trust on till I return to thee."

One night a seagull cried to me,
"Thy Laddie sails an unknown sea."
One night I heard the breakers roar,
"Thy Laddie's on an unknown shore."

Yet from the mountain's crest each day,
I gaze far out upon the bay
That leads unto the restless sea,
The sea that holds my heart from me.

B. W. BURLEIGH

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

THE WATCHERS

On some brown hill the patient herd-boy lies
All through the dim and dull-red autumn day,
Seeing the few clouds floating far and gray,
Seeing the mile-high plover soar and rise,
Hearing the cattle graze in muffled wise.
Now and anon his yearning glances stray
About the faint horizon far away,
Where the wide prairie meets the bending skies.
So, from their thousand homes of hopeless toil,
Are longing looks of dull-eyed women sent,
Through weary days of work and nights of
 pain.
So, grim and wind-blown tillers of the soil,
Gaze, and still gaze, yet find no solacement
O'er their life's drear and limitless wide plain.

WILL DILLMAN

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

JUNE

O, peerless June! O, love's own time—
From out thy heart pours nature's rhyme.
Thy lilting songs through waves of light
Beat upward with the skylark's flight;
Thy fragrant breath, with wooing sigh,
Breathes forth where waxen lilies lie,
And as thy languorous spell imparts
Its warmth to their half-dreaming hearts—
They thrill with life! th' buds unfold
To show their calyxes of gold.
O, peerless June! O, love's own time!
From out thy heart pours nature's rhyme.

O, peerless June! O, witching time!
Thy harmonies are all achime.
Thy tilts of color,—brilliant,—gay,—
Thy flower wraiths that droop and sway;
Thy pale moon-tints laced back by stars
That swing from twilight's crimson bars.
Thy butterflies make dots between
The brooklet and the meadow-green;
Thy bumble-bees with threatening drone
Protect thee on thy flower throne.
Rose-kissed,—rose-crowned! fair month atune
With nature's grace,—O peerless June.

MAY PHILLIPS TATRO

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

SYLVAN LAKE

Calm, placid mirror of the skies,
Safe guarded by thy rocky walls,
In tranquil sleep thy bosom lies,
Or sighing gently heaves and falls.

The stern gray rocks that grandly lift
Their furrowed faces high in air
To where the sun-kissed vapors drift
Smile down upon thee, sleeping there.

The tall, dark pines, thy henchmen good,
Close to thy dancing ripples press,
Or bow their heads in pensive mood
To whisper of thy loveliness.

Fair Sylvan Lake! No tempests sweep
Across thy doubly-guarded breast;
In calm content thy beauties sleep,
A haven of untrammelled rest.

MORTIMER C. BROWN

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

YOU PRETTY FISHER MAIDEN

You pretty fisher maiden,
Come row your boat to land;
Draw near me and be seated;
Talk with me, hand in hand.

Your head lay on my bosom,
And do not fearful be;
The deep you row so careless
And daily trust the sea.

My heart is like the ocean:
Has storm and ebb and flow,
And many pearls and rarest
Rest in its depths below.

Translated from Heine.

FRANK HERMON WENTWORTH

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

SUBLIMITY

I asked a maiden in the blush of youth,
In whose gray eyes there shone the germs of
truth,
Whose soft red lips were parted in a smile,
Whose lovely face was innocent of guile:
"What do you hold the dearest thing in life?"
"To be," she answer made, "a happy wife!"

I asked the mother, as she softly pressed,
With tender care, an infant to her breast,
Whose gentle glances hovered o'er the child—
Which, sleeping, of the angels dreamed and
smiled—
"What is the sweetest pain there is on earth?"
She bent and kissed the babe: "In giving
birth!"

I asked the matron, who with loving pride
Beheld the children clustered by her side;
Who in the wicker chair rocked to and fro—
Just as she rocked and crooned in years ago—
"What is the greatest blessing God can send?"
"A home where love and sweet contentment
blend!"

I asked a wrinkled woman, o'er whose head
The snows of many a winter had been shed,
Whose children from the roof-tree far had
strayed—

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

Whose husband in his grave had long been
laid—

“What is the dearest memory of your life?”

“The day that I was made a happy wife!”

SAM T. CLOVER

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

CELIA

Celia hath a winning grace,
Something rare,
Not more winning than her face
Or her hair.
Dimples play at hide and seek
All day long on Celia's cheek.
No one ever calls her meek
Or debonair.

Eyes of brown which send a glance
Here and there,
Do her beauty much enhance,
All declare.
Eyes which always seem to say
In a merry, careless way:
"Life is but a roundelay
Everywhere."

How she walks I scarce could tell
Did I dare,
Lithesome like a lily's bell,
Light as air.
All she hath of tears and woes,
If at all such things she knows,
More with poetry than prose,
Will compare.

She can talk both warm and cold—
Ah, beware!

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

Filling hearts of young or old
 With despair.
And I wonder, since she seems
To be made of dizzy dreams,
How she weaves such wily schemes
 To ensnare.

Celia's broken many hearts,
 Was it fair?
She hath false and fickle arts,
 I can swear.
Time is growing on apace—
Maidens taking Celia's place
Leave her but a broken vase,
 Who will care?
 CHARLES BRACY LAWTON

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

ONE OF THE PALLS

I were a pall to the burryin',
Joe's finally out o' the way,
Nothin' 'special ailin' o' him,
Just ol' age and ginr'l decay.
Hope to the Lord 'at I'll never be
Ol' an' decrepit an' useless as he.
Cuss to his family the last five year—
Monstrous expensive with keep so dear,—
'Sides all the fuss an' worryin'.
Terrible trial to get so old—
Cur'us a man'll continue to hold
On to life when it's easy to see
His chances for livin', tho' drefnelly slim,
Are better'n his family are lottin' for him.
Joe 'us 'at kind o' a hanger-on—
Hadn't no sense o' the time to quit;
Stunted descreeshun an' stall-fed grit
Helped him unbuckle many a cinch
Whar sensible men 'ud a died in the pinch.
Kind o' tickled to have him gone;
Bested for once and laid away,
Got him down whar he boun' to stay;
I were a pall to his burryin'.

Knowed him for more'n sixty year back—
Used to be summ'at older 'an him—
Fought him one night to a huskin' bee,
Licked him in manner uncommon complete;
Every one said 't'us a beautiful fight—
Joe he wan't satisfied with it that way,
Kep' dingin' along an' w'en he got through

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

The wust lookin' critter 'at ever you see
Were stretched on a bed rigged up in the hay—
They carted me home the follerin' day.
Got me a sweetheart, purty an' trim—
Tole me 'at I's a heap lik'ler'n Joe;
Mittened him twict, Joe kep' on the track,
Follered her round ary place she 'ud go;
Offered to lick him; says she, "It's a treat,
Le's watch an' fin' out what the poór crit-
ter'll do":

Watched him, believin' the thing 'us all right—
That identical gal is Joe's widdet to-night.
Run to be jestice, then Joe he run too;
Knowed I 'us pop'lar, an' he hadn't a friend.
So thar wan't no use o' my hurryin'.
The 'lection come off, we counted the votes,
I hadn't enough—Joe had 'em to lend.
Now all the way through I been takin' notes
O' his disagreeable way,
An' it tickles me now to be able to say
He's bested fer good in the end:
Got him down whar he boun' to stay,
I were a pail to his burryin'.

DOANE ROBINSON

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

AN IDEAL

I'll worship beauty,—so ran a poet's thought;
Rare tints and colorings and grace shall win
My utmost praise; words ever shall be quick
To lend a gracious touch and rounded praise
Unto the seal that loveliness proclaims.
Uncounted shall life's drabs and plainness be—
Worthy of earth, indeed, I know they are,
But, void of higher gift, may not demand
The adoration of my willing pen!

But when on distant shores he stricken lay,
Helpless and sick, where only strangers came,
And by his couch an aged woman knelt,
From whom all youthful beauty was effaced,
And who did gently bathe the sufferer's brow—
Speaking as mother-love alone impels—
The poet now put away his old resolve,
And found eternal beauty in that face.

WILL P. CHAMBERLAIN

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

MY WILD ROSE GARDEN

Mine is no choice collection rare
Of stately palms and orchids fair,
But just a maze of lovely tangle
O'er-run with fern, wild rose and bramble;
Ay! sweeter far than hot-house gems,
Wild roses on their slender stems!
Their fragrance floating everywhere,
Filling the hazy, summer air
With subtle perfume, faint and sweet,
My wild rose garden, full, complete—
With coloring like a sea-shell tint—
While over all the sunbeams glint
And flirt, and play with petals pink,
And glittering dew-drops rise and sink
Into the hearts of these fair things;
A skylark madly, sweetly sings
His joy that so much beauty glows
Within the life of a wild rose.

MAY PHILLIPS TATRO

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

CHILDHOOD

When, from the arches of the skies,
The evening shades are downward flung
And, in their purpling canopies,
The beacons of the night are hung,
The fetters of maturity
Are from the burdened spirit cast,
And recreant Fancy wanders free
Along the byways of the past.

Far back, through half-forgotten scenes
That throng the middle course of life,
Regretful memory fondly gleams
'Mid joys in childhood's hours rife.
The haunts we loved, where first our feet
Against our Mother Earth were pressed,
Now seem a sorrowless retreat
Where weary wanderers may rest.

Each pleasure then was free from pain,
Each sorrow lasted but a day,
And every cloud that threatened rain,
By smiling suns was chased away.
No gall was mingled with the sweet,
No serpent trailed the paths of youth,
Each gift was in itself complete,
And every friend a friend in truth.

Long is the path that leads me down
From those dear scenes to where I stand,

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

And meagre are the gifts that crown
 My days that toil on sea and land;
And as the weary seasons roll
 My heart is filled with longings wild,
To thrust life's burden from my soul,
 And be once more a happy child.

MORTIMER C. BROWN

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

FOR ART'S SAKE

A picture was painted and hung on the line,
For it showed a remarkable touch.
All the critics agreed that the subject was fine,
But the artist—"He wasn't much."

He had lived but one day,—does a mortal live
more?—

It was all in this gilt and white frame.
The catalogue had it, "Patrice, 94,"
While a dash took the place of his name.

He has gone to the devil, oh, long years ago,
But the picture that hung on the line
Hangs to-day in the home of Patrice—So and
so—

To her husband, a likeness divine.

CHARLES BRACY LAWTON

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

HERDING

No end of rich green medder land
Spicked out with ever' kind of poseys.
Es fer as I kin understand
They's nothin' else on earth so grand
Es just a field of prairy roseys,
Mixed up with blue, gold-beaded plumes
Of shoestring flowers and peavey blooms.
Take it a warm, sunshiny day,
When prairys stretch so fer away
Ther lost at last in smoky gray,
And hulkin' yoke-worn oxen browse
Aroun' the coteaus with the cows,—
The tipsy, stag'rin day-old calf
Mumbles a bleat and slabbers a laugh—
And yearlin' steers, so round and slick,
Wade in the cool and sparklin' crick,
While cute spring bossies romp and play
With Ponto, in the tall slough hay.
Yeh picket out the gentle Roany,
Yer knowin', faithful herdin' pony,
And tumblin' down upon yer back
Wher' gay, sweet-smellin' beauties bide
In posey beds, three counties wide,
You take a swig of prairy air,
With which old speerits ken't compare,
And think and plan, and twist, and rack
Yer brains, to work some scheme aroun'
To get a week to spend in town.

DOANE ROBINSON

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

THE GOLDEN WEST

(Ballade.)

Where the grasses are kissed by the wandering
breeze,

And the fields are rich with the golden grain;
Where the schooner plows through the prairie
seas

To its destined port on the western plain,
Where homes may never be sought in vain,—
And hope is the thriftiest plant that grows!

Where man may ever his rights maintain
And land is as free as the wind that blows!

Where the soil is the richest the eye ever sees,
And the people a unit of muscle and brain;
Where far from the cities of indolent ease
The prodigal son his place may regain.

Where the trail gives place to the thundering
train,—

And the plow turns under the prairie rose!

Where the farmers are happy and never
complain

And land is as free as the wind that blows!

Where the queen of the soil is the goddess
Ceres,

Her scepter, the sunshine,—her consort, the
rain;

Where the fruits of this garden of Hesperides
All the life-giving blessings of heaven con-
tain.

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

Where vigor and health forever remain—
Through summer heat and December snows!
Where nature is seen in her happiest vein
And land is as free as the wind that blows!

(Envoy.)

Come, blue-eyed Norse and sturdy Dane,
And witness the gifts which Heaven bestows;
Where health and wealth and plenty reign
And land is as free as the wind that blows!

SAM T. CLOVER

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

THE OLD SOD SHANTY

It stood upon an unturned plain
Beside the Bru-le's sloping bank.
The grass around was tall and rank
That, breeze swept, was an ocean main.

Bold sunflowers decked the turf-piled roof;
For these, indeed, were pioneers,
That westward prest and knew no fears
'Gainst which their natures were not proof.

The door an artisan might scorn;
A window, too,—God spare the mark!
'Twas home, although 'twas sometimes
dark,
A home where tinsel was not born.

And oft the long autumnal rain
Came through the chinks with drip and
pat,
And we looked somewhat like the rat—
That misused rat of boyhood fame.

The old sod shanty, crumbling now
Beneath the weight of drifting time,
Wove out its own unpolished rhyme,
And 'graved it on the settler's brow.

Vast change o'er all may come, and will,
The curtain rise on vaster years;
But ah! there lingers, half in tears,
That mouldering shanty's mem'ry still.

WILL P. CHAMBERLAIN

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

MISTER TAPLEY

Along in June
Sech craps I never seen,
The wheat stud up above knee-high,
So kind of rich and blue-black green,
"I ruther calkerlate," sez I,
'I'll go to town this afternoon
And buy a bran new bind-machine."

Come night, when Jones sot on the rail
A-whinin' bout the 'tarnal hail
Thet give the craps a swashin',
I sez,—a-pickin' up a pail,
And scoopin' up a bar'l of hail
To melt fer washin',—
"Wall, I don't feel half-way so mean
Es ef I'd bought thet bind-machine."

DOANE ROBINSON

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

O WINDING SIOUX

O winding Sioux! O winding Sioux!
For many a mile I've followed you;
Along your banks I love to stray
Far from the dusty, traveled way.

From prairies, bare of shrub or tree
I turn, O sinuous stream, to thee!
And in thy leafy shade I find
A solace for the careworn mind.

In graceful curves across the plain—
And in and out through fields of grain—
With sluggish step and murmuring song
You wind your dreamy way along.

Anon with quickened pulse you flow
To join the eddying swirl below;
And onward plunge through rocky dells
With heaving breast and troubled swells.

Then once again in quiet shade—
Below the stately palisade—
O'er jasper rocks you slip and splash
With giddy haste and reckless dash.

O winding Sioux! O winding Sioux!
Through summer days I've followed you;
And on your banks amid your braes
Have sung your never-ending praise.

SAM T. CLOVER

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

OLE UNCLE EPH

Dar's heaps o' music in de rustlin' ob de corn,
O yas, dar is now, shore's you's born;
It keeps a-singin' in dis pore old darkey's ear,
De same's it's done fo' many a year.

Long 'go I heerd it like a hummin' in de air,
Long 'fore I wore dis old white hair;
Sounds 'bout de same jas' as it allus used to
 sound,
Down on de ole plantation ground.

When all de darkies would be singin' round at
 night,
Yas, ebery one wid all his might,
We'd dance an' shuffle wid de fiddle an' de
 bow,
Away back dar long years ago.

Dar's heaps o' mem'ry in de rustlin' ob de corn,
O yas, dar is now, shore's you's born;
Dar's voices singin' out among de wavin'
 leaves,
All in de night an' mornin' breeze.

I sees de darkies all a-workin' in de corn,
Long 'fore de sunrise in de morn,
Den hear dem singin' an' a-shoutin' in de night,
Out whar de moon am shinin' bright.

Dar's heaps o' sadness in de rustlin' ob de corn,
O yas, dar is now, shore's you's born.
Whar is de darkies dat was singin' all de day?
Jas' whar's dey gone now, anyway?

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

It's mighty lonesome since dis darkey's all
alone,—

Now since his 'Liza's dead an' gone,—
An' all de chilun is a hidin' far away
Jas' like dey use to hide an' play.

But spect's I'll find 'em all agin some udder day,
I'll hear 'em laugh an' shout an' say,
"We's waitin', Uncle Eph, jas' waitin' now
fo' you,
Until yo'r work down dar is fro'."

B. W. BURLEIGH

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

SOLITUDE

When sated with the bitter and the sweet
Of common life and duty's constant round,
A longing draws me out beyond the hills
On solitary paths. I wander there
Toward clouds like phantoms hovering in the
light

Above earth's fading bounds. So free and all
Alone to feel the earth's broad throbbing breast,
I greet the evening wind, full fraught with
scents

Of green expanse; I greet the silence deep,
Pierced only by the insect's shrilly song.
The ardent tints that spread to fill the world,
My being also fill, and kinship now
I claim with yonder isolated group
Of lofty forms, firm rooted, towering dark
Against the lucent sky. The fading lights,
That throw their harmonizing shroud o'er all,
Hold also me in welcome solitude.

G. G. WENZLAFF

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

DISAPPOINTMENT

As one who dreams of happy sunlit skies,
Music of martins, laughter, and ripe grain,
And waking finds the window dark with rain,
While over all gray melancholy lies,—
So from my empty vision do I rise.
Was I not promised being without pain,
Seasons of rapture, love, and golden gain?
So, how each vain incorporal phantom flies!
Why, what a round of useless toil I go!
Why should I strive and struggle bootlessly?
A day, and I shall quit the fields I know,
And the fair flocks, and each bird's litany.
My very heart, decayed and dust, shall blow
A rose to deck one coming after me.

WILL DILLMAN

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

MY SOLDIER BOY

When evening shadows fell last Christmas day,
We bore him gently in our arms away;
For all day long, from rise of morning sun,
Full many battles had he lost and won.

Once and again the foemen sallied out,
'Mid trumpet blast and loud exulting shout,
To meet the enemy and hold at bay
The onward rushing troops in dread dismay.

Far from the cushioned ramparts' dizzy height,
Where gleamed the soldiers' helmets in the
light

There tumbled twenty brand new men or more
All on the battlefield,—the parlor floor.

What if the horses were of wood? They ran
As fast as when at sunrise they began.
And soldiers made of tin do not retreat,
As long as there's a worthy foe to meet.

And Fido, thinking warfare was but play,
Barked loudly as he saw the bloody fray;
While underneath the Christmas evergreen
Was waged the hardest battle ever seen.

One ever-moving figure held my gaze,
As swiftly in the midst of cannon's blaze,
He ever and anon, with waving hair,
Sent shouts and drumbeats thro' the lurid air.

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

I could but love him as I saw him fight
Against the stronger foe from morn till night;
And as his childish figure struggled there,
I lifted up for him a mother's prayer.

The battle seemed secured 'mid weapon's
gleams,
When reinforcements from the land of dreams
Fought hard against my hero on the field,
And step by step I saw him backward yield.

Then o'er the battlefield on every hand,
The air was darkened by a storm of sand;
Too weary grew my soldier's limbs to leap,
I saw him fall upon the floor—asleep.

The carpet battlefield was figured red,
Where lay my fallen hero's golden head;
One hand still clasped his trusty bugle true,
One arm around his silent drum he threw.

Then as the noise of battle died away,
While curfew tolled the end of Christmas day,
We gently lifted up his curly head,
And softly bore him to his little bed.

And as we smiled we kissed the darling boy,
Well knowing that the day was one of joy,
Well knowing that the drum and bugle, too,
Would signal early that the fight renew.

B. W. BURLEIGH

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

MY HOME

When the sun rides high
In the cloudless sky,
And the scorching south winds blow;
And the fierce beams beat
With a tropic heat
On the parched earth below;
When the prairie's green
And shimmering sheen
Is changed to autumnal brown,
Then I think ofttime
Of another clime,
And long for the storm-cloud's frown.

I think of the hills
And the sparkling rills,
That gem their emerald slopes;
The forests and trees,
The rocks and the leas,
The glens and the brookside copse.
Oh! the mystic maze
Of the woodland ways,
Where a child I used to roam!
Oh! the charms so rare
Of the valley fair,
That I love to call my home!

FANNIE E. KNAPP

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

THE COTEAUS OF DAKOTA

Oh, the coteaus of Dakota, hear them sing,—
Mimic mountains of the prairies fair and
free,—

In their music hear the prophecy they bring
Of the grandeur of Dakota's jubilee!
Hearken at the dawning to their singing,
Hear the chorus of the peaks, bravely ringing.

"We wave the grass, we strew the flowers,
We feed these sparkling springs of ours,
We drink the rain, we blue the lakes,
We drift the winter's pliant flakes."
Hear the merry morning chorus of the peaks!

"Our gracious soil the garner fills,
The flocks are scattered on our hills;
In plenty's store, in perfect health,
We've comfort and abundant wealth."
Hear the thrifty morning chorus of the peaks!

"We see our bluffs and coulees throng
With men and women fair and strong,
With every gift and every grace
Becoming the supremest race."
Hear the grand prophetic chorus of the peaks!

Oh, the coteaus of Dakota, hear them sing,—
Mimic mountains of the prairies fair and
free,—

In their music hear the prophecy they bring
Of the grandeur of Dakota's jubilee!

DOANE ROBINSON

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

CONTENT

One seeks in vain
A fairer country than this broad domain:—
Where freedom dwells on coteau, hill, and
plain—
And fertile prairies, rich with growing grain,
Invite the men of courage, brawn, and brain.

Hither on breezy wing
Far from the pampered east a-wandering—
All gilded customs to the winds I fling;
Why should my heart to city pleasures cling?
My shack's a castle! and I reign its king.

Then come what may,
Here, in this cabin rude, content I'll stay;
Here, at my cabin door, I'll whiff away
The cares and troubles of a yesterday:—
Why should I change my lot? Why farther
stray?

SAM T. CLOVER

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

THE RAPIDS

Be thou, my boat, trim-rigged and sure of oar,
That when the placid waters are passed o'er,
And on my ear the rapids' mutter breaks,
Their sweeping threat no craven fear awakes;
But as the trapper lone, e'en drifting there,
Doth with him recent trophies calmly bear,—
So I, though heart and hand less firm may be,
Would sing about thy brink, Eternity!

Would sing, as in the bygone days I sang
A child at play upon those bars, and sprang
From one pink shell to where in sandy mire
A larger hid the day's pellucid fire;
For still as children, mocked by mystery,
Of stronger growth, we note the calling sea
And feel the onset of the tugging stream
Which seems to mock, Fares thus thy cherished
dream?

Oh! in that thrill of dashing waters I
Shall find my truer self, and laughing, cry
Unto the churning, swirling, bending foams,
About me dashing, "Ye are play! Your moans
Are tinkling strains; your spray is summer
dew!"

Why should I turn aside, or deeply rue
Life's parting stroke, or even shudder then?
Ay, from the rapids I shall rise again!

WILL P. CHAMBERLAIN

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

NOT YET, NOT YET

O weary watcher, not yet, not yet!
You must still work on with dim eyes wet,
And scan the waves with their white-capped
foam,

For a sign of a sail that is nearing home.
It will not reach you, dear heart, to-day,
For your treasure went sailing away, away
Far over the world's great surging main,
And this must content you, this sad refrain—
Not yet, not yet!

Not yet! and the years creep slowly by
And we struggle for patience and hush the cry
That comes from the soul as we look in vain
For the swift release from the toil and pain
That forms a part of our daily life,
A part that is mingled with grief and strife;
But no! We must wait for some far-off time,
When our treasures will come, ah, yours and
mine!

Not yet, not yet!

Not yet, not yet! O tired heart,
You have drifted so far from your ships apart;
At eventide, when the sun sinks low,
And the twilight shadows toss to and fro,
You may watch till the morning's rosy light
Sweeps over the world, but your eager sight
Will never a glimpse of a white sail see—
O, when will my treasures come back to me?
Not yet, not yet!

MAY PHILLIPS TATRO

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

HELPIN' HAY

Been up to Will's,
A-helpin' hay.
They's suthin' fills
A man,
W'en he's a-makin' hay,
'Ith sort o' satisfact'ry sense,
Like goin' to a dollar show
Fer suthin' under fifty cents.
I allus can—
W'en I'm a-makin' hay
Up ther' to Will's,
W'en daisies blow
'N' yaller goldenrods
Flickers 'n' nods,
'N' thistles show
Acrost the fence
Wher' loafin' critters feeds
Amongst the bresh 'n' weeds—
Feel rich enough, though I ain't wuth a cent,
To buy the yeth 'n' run the govament.
Ther's some folks kind o' grills
W'en they're ableeged to work,
'N' sort o' fret 'n' fume,
'N' hunt a show to shirk;
But w'en I'm helpin' hay
Up ther' to Will's,
W'en blue-j'int's bloom,
'N' swishin' sprangle-top

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

Are makin' crop,
'N' peavy-buds are gittin' red 'n' redder,
I ain't afeard of work,
But all the shim'ry day,
Flat on a bunch of hay,
I slouch down on the medder,
W'ile Will fo'ks up the hay.

DOANE ROBINSON

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

BEAUTIFUL BIG STONE

When from the burdens and toil of the day
Mortals, aweary, would wander away,
Shake from their spirits the mantle of care,
Seeking for freedom, as birds in the air,
Gladly they turn to thy restful retreat,
Where sister states in sweet unity meet,
Bathe in thy waters and float on thy breast,
Beautiful Big Stone, the Gem of the West!

Light on thy bosom the water-fowl glides,
Deep in thy waters the finny shoal hides,
Tempting the sportsman his skill to employ,
Crowning each day with its measure of joy;
Softly re-echo from forest and shore
Puff of the steamer and splash of the oar,
Bearing glad hearts on a pleasure-bound quest—
Beautiful Big Stone, the Gem of the West!

Here gentle Nature communes with the soul,
Murmuring low in the billows that roll,
Singing sweet songs in the whispering trees,
Lisp of the ripple and sigh of the breeze,
Smoothing the wrinkle and bringing again
Sunshine and youth to the spirits of men;
All who are weary thou givest them rest,
Beautiful Big Stone, the Gem of the West!

MORTIMER C. BROWN

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

SWEET DEATH

Ah, now I know that you who seemed so cold,
That you of whom I felt the deepest awe
And dread year after year; in whom I saw
A foe to bear me to a tomb where mould,
Decay, and dampened clods would me infold,
Are, after all, my friend. There is no flaw
To-day I would amend in nature's law
Which put me in your strange and subtile hold.
With faith grown out of hope, I place my hand
Thus willingly in yours, with no regret
That you have come. To gain the unknown
land
Which you conceal, I gladly pay the debt;
For this weak, flagging clay no more is manned
To brave life's way, and timely we have met.

CHARLES BRACY LAWTON

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

THE REAPERS

Far toward the half-set sun I saw the reapers,
Near the wild ending of the wind-blown day,
Each driver with his four-in-hand, the horses
Hastening over the bloody-stubbed hills,
At one side and behind the war-like dust-cloud
Following each; they were the charioteers,
Guiding over the trembling fields of slaughter
Scythe-bearing chariots of the Persian king.
And now some turned the curve with high-
 raised whips,
Like swords, and wide-mouthed prancing
 steeds; they were
The wild cloud-fighting warriors of the skies
The Romans saw o' nights i' the Punic War.
And still they passed in the red evening wind,
Far down the west in silver-shining dust,
The reels flashing like burnished oars; they
 were
The Argonautic seekers of the fleece,
The fifty Greeks, sailing the sun-set seas.

WILL DILLMAN

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

BESIDE THE SIOUX

Dear river, through a trellising of vines,
Where cling the purpling grapes of autumn
days,

I view thy dappling currents' onward trend,
And watch the shadows crowd the sun's rude
blaze.

Yea, charming musings doth thy spell impart,
To twine about and permeate the heart.

The blue-brown dove, perched in a stunted ash,
Goes o'er the monody of her welling plaint.
A restless quail within the willows' screen,
Pipes forth his tuneful notes, now shrill, now
faint.

And thou, bright Sioux, dost know these vary-
ing moods,
Snug in thy drowsy thralls of verging woods.

Oft when bold weather laid its iron grip
Upon thy marge, and trees were void and gray,
I cleft thy crystal sheen with steely blade.
And oft while crouched to drink at parting day,
I found thy labor was a ceaseless song,
Tho' boreal clouds did heavy hours prolong.

And now this afternoon of Sabbath balm,
With Mother Nature's hand upon my soul,
I stretch me out upon the sloping sward,
Where crickets drone their chirrupings of dole
In slow-time measure, and the vapory dew
Trails on thy waters, my beloved Sioux.

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

O, when my life's last dream is put away,
And when my eyes close in death-curtained
sleep,

I would my dust might mingle then with thee,—
A part of all thy silent waters' sweep
Down pictured avenues, e'en to the sea,—
Till I be lost beneath its depths with thee.

WILL P. CHAMBERLAIN

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

HARVEST TIME

The binder now is silent
And the trim stacks dot the plain,
The thresher, thro' the hazy air,
Drones forth a soft refrain;
Like golden sands the winnowed wheat
O'erleaps the measure's rim
While stack-bound crickets murmur sweet
To swell the harvest hymn.

Upon the slowly rip'ning grass
The sleepy cattle feed,
While lazy zephyrs wander past
To stir the tumble weed.
Among the glinting stubble spears
The skulking chickens run,
Or—where no hunters rouse their fears—
Lie basking in the sun.

Content and plenty seem to brood
O'er hamlet, field and farm;
Brown Autumn, with her stores of food,
Imparts an added charm.
And as our garners overflow
Our hearts are turned above
To Him who sends to all below
Rich tokens of His love.

MORTIMER C. BROWN

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

FAST ASLEEP

(A lullaby.)

Backward and forward the rocker goes,
Wafting the baby to sweet repose;
Close by the cradle the mother croons
Lullaby, rock-a-by nursery tunes;
Dreamily singing she patiently tries
Sleep to bring to the baby's eyes.

Minute by minute the evening flits,
Still in the chair she drowsily sits;
Soothing and rubbing the aching gums,
Longing for slumber that never comes;
Rocking the baby that fretfully lies,
Filling the room with its nervous cries.

Weary with watching, the mother sings,
Wooing the god with the leaden wings;
Softer and softer the ditty grows,
Now the little one's eyelids close;
Sinking at last into dreamland deep—
Mother and baby are fast asleep.

SAM T. CLOVER

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

RAIN IN HARVEST

At two the white-hot sun was overcast
With shreds of pale gray mist;
And in the vast
And reaching west deep banks arose,
Cool blue and amethyst.

With far faint blows,
Tap, tap, and tap, the farm mechanic ham-
mered.

The somber crows
Flapped gloomily from hill to hill.
By still
Unruffled ponds the scolding blackbird clam-
ored.

Still clanged the reapers o'er the ripened plain,
Distant and near,
Low and sullen, or loud and clear.

Then came the rain,
Gentle and soft upon the brittle grain
Upon the long brown leaves,
Upon the yellow shocks,
Upon the fallen sheaves,
Lulling and fresh and cool,
Stilling the farmyard cocks,
Dark'ning the wayside pool.

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

The drivers hastened home with their teams;
The reapers were left by the wheat.
Oh! welcome rain, how sweet,
How restful and soothing it seems!
Oh! beautiful harvest rain,
After the days of heat,
After the toil and pain!

WILL DILLMAN

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

THE CHAPLET

Yonder stands the mountain chaplet
Looking quietly down the vale;
There below by mead and brooklet
Sings the shepherd boy so hale.

Mournful tolls the bell from yonder,
Awful sounds the funeral lay,
Hushed is now the merry singer
By the chanting far away.

They are borne to graves up yonder
Who enjoyed themselves below.
Shepherd boy, ah! list young shepherd,
'Twill be sung for thee just so!

Translated from Uhland.

G. G. WENZLAFF

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

OCTOBER

A sky as soft as a dove's gray breast—
From a willow branch swings an empty nest;
A sumac tree nods to and fro
Its crimson berries that set aglow
The autumn days; while a lark's sweet song
Is caught by the breeze and borne along
Till it tangles itself with a blackbird's lay,
As he leaves our world on his southern way.

An ivy rich in its blood-red tint,
A scarlet maple, where flirt and glint
Stray sunbeams that hide in the dry brown sod,
And spring into life in the golden rod.
A startled quail in the tall, lush grass
Goes whirring by; and as we pass
A cricket pipes his hearth-stone call.
The spell of October lies over all!

MAY PHILLIPS TATRO

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

THE RUSSIAN THISTLE

Thou tangled, thorny, wiry mass of brier,
Allured from off thy native Russian ground,
O'er land and sea with many a westward
bound,
To lord it over every western shire!
What imp within thee, or what secret fire
Impels thy tireless, ceaseless tumbling 'round
Audaciously on every field and mound,
As if to satiate some strange desire?
Is there imprisoned in thy weird embrace
Some evil spirit doomed to rove at night?
Else why the owl at sight of thy mad race
Springs up and shrieks aloud in startled
fright?
But while we look to see thy fiendish grace,
We're more at ease when thou art out of
sight.

B. W. BURLEIGH

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

IN OCTOBER

The woodland is ablaze
With the glory of dying leaves,
And over the sun-browned ways
Come homeward the ripened sheaves.
The amber sunset gates
By the ruddy orb are kissed,
While the harvest moon, as a bride who waits,
Beams soft thro' the rising mist.

O saddened, yet sacred days,
When the harvest of life is done!
How sweet, thro' the soft'ning haze,
Smiles backward the sinking sun!
The glory of days well spent
Shines forth on the dying leaves,
As the chariot of God is sent
To garner life's ripened sheaves.

MORTIMER C. BROWN

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

INDIAN SUMMER

Oh! the mellow, golden days,
Running o'er with smoky haze,
Filtered through with sunshine patches and
 where star-beams throw their rays;
Fragrance of a June long past
Over all its spell has cast,
And the cloud-ships sail the azure with their
 moon-tipped spars and mast.

Oh! the mellow, golden hours,
Filled with fragrance of dead flowers,
Drifting upward from the meadow wet with
 pattering autumn showers;
Interlaced with leaves and vine,
Mingling spots of shade and shine,
And the sumac fruitage gleaming red as spark-
 ling jets of wine.

Oh! the fluttering wings that go,
Dipping upward, high and low,
Southward, where the breath of winter swings
 the roses to and fro;
A late bird pipes forth a cheer,
Mullen stalks stand brown and sear,
Edging round this strange and dreamy, half
 pathetic time of year.

Oh! the mellow, golden days,
Running o'er with smoky haze,
Filtered through with sunshine patches, and
 where star-beams throw their rays;

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

Catching echoes all achime
From mid-summer's perfect rhyme,
Ho! for all the gladness floating through the
Indian summer time.

MAY PHILLIPS TATRO

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

HENRY

Now an old man lookin' back,
I remember best of all,
When I's jest a little boy,
How my mother ust to call
For me, standin' in the door
Of the old house, when I'd be
Playin' round the garden patch,
Er the corn-crib—"Hen-er-ee!"

Then when I was bigger, too,
I'd be snarin' gophers, say,
Down along the dusty road,
On a sunny summer day,
Huntin' hens' nests in the weeds,
Er some other deviltry;
Sweet an' clear I'd hear that voice
Callin' to me—"Hen-er-ee!"

In them days I recollect
Herdin' cattle far away
From the old home, on a bright
Sunny afternoon. I'd lay
'Most asleep an' hear them sad
Plovers cryin' over me—
Dream I heerd that fur-off voice
Callin' to me—"Hen-er-ee!"

Oh, these feet have wandered fur
Sence them airly days is past.
Mother's silent many years
Sence I heerd her call the last.

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

Yet a-roamin' still I hear
In the night a heavenly
Voice from sad an' fur-off stars
Callin' to me—"Hen-er-ee!"

WILL DILLMAN

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

AUTUMN REVERY

Cold are the winds that waft
The faded leaves about;
Chill are the rays that laughed
Once through the summer cloud.

Far flies the pinioned fowl
To other cheerier lands
Touched not by Winter's scowl
Nor by his chilling hands.

Ah me! Could I but rise
And from chill moods retreat,
Dwell would I, too 'neath skies
Where only warm hearts beat.

G. G. WENZLAFF

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

THE LIGHTS BEYOND

O weary soul, oppressed, downcast,
With naught in future, or in past,
To give thee rest, or hope, or peace,
Why seek in vain for some release
From sorrow's grievous care and pain
By grasping earthly joys in vain?
O look beyond, and look above
All earthly help and mortal love,
Where shine the lights on yonder shore
 Fadeless for evermore.

What lights? The lights of Faith sublime
E'er gleaming o'er the sands of time,
E'er lighting with their glorious rays
The gloom and darkness of our days.
The helpful ways, the counsel wise
Of souls now safe in Paradise,
And Hope, and Truth, and Love divine,—
These are the guiding stars that shine,
These are the lights on yonder shore
 Fadeless for evermore.

FANNIE E. KNAPP

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

THE PINE TREE

Alone upon the hill the pine tree stands,
With half bare roots fast clutching frozen sands;
Its mourning boughs, against the bitter snows,
Sing minor strains to every wind that blows.
And thro' the lone hours of the winter night
It watches while the world is lost to sight.
O fitting emblem of the silent dead,
Beneath thy boughs we stand with bended head!

Within the cozy room the Christmas tree,
'Mid scenes of happiness and merry glee,
Stands radiant as a bride. And everywhere
The tinsel tufts, 'mid glint and gleam and glare,
Reflect the bounding heart's joy far and wide,
Upon this joyous, happy Christmas tide.
O tree, removed from snows and winds and
 strife,
Most fitting emblem of eternal life!

But whence this change from winter's chilling
 nights
To scenes of happiness 'mid myriad lights?
The Christ was born and made the Christmas
 tree
The symbol of the change for you and me,
That comes when human hearts, weighed down
 with sin,
Awake from death to glorious life within.
O Christ, whose blood the human soul hath
 bought,
We praise Thee for the change Thy name hath
 wrought!

B. W. BURLIGH

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

WHEN THE SNOW IS ON THE PRAIRIE

When the snow is on the prairie
An' the drift is in the cut,
An' life gets a trifle dreary
Joggin' in the same old rut,
Nothing like a good old fiddle
Takes the wrinkles out o' things.
There's the chirp o' larks an' robins
In the twitter ov 'er strings.

When the whizzin', roarin' blizzard
Is a shuttin' out the day,
An' the balmy breath ov summer
Seems a thousand years away,
You can start the eaves a drippin'
With the tinklin' ov 'er strings,
You kin hear the water bubblin'
From a dozen dancin' springs.

Rub the bow across the rosin,
Twist the peg an' sound your A,
There'll be bobolinks a clinkin'
When you once begin ter play;
Bees'll waller in the clover,
Blossoms whisper in the sun,
All the world a runnin' over
With the sunshine an' the fun.

Git the gals an' boys together.
"Pardners all for a quadrille,"
Cheeks aglow with frosty weather,
Hearts that never felt a chill;

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

Youth an' music never weary,
Tho' they meet in hall or hut—
When the snow is on the prairie
An' the drift is in the cut.

"Sashy by an' s'lute yer pardners.
Sashy back an' how d'ye do!"
Everybody's feelin' funny
An' the fiddle feels it too.
Out o' doors the storm may sputter,
But within the skies are bright,
Pansies peekin' out, an' butter-
Cups a bobbin' in the light.

O, the joy ov healthful pleasure!
O, the trip ov tireless feet!
While the fiddle fills each measure
With its music wild an' sweet;
Glints of sun the shadows vary,
Though from out the world we're shut,
When the snow is on the prairie
An' the drift is in the cut.

MORTIMER C. BROWN

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

WINTER FLOWERS

A GIFT

These wretched blows threw off restraint to
show

Their tenderness and fervor to the world.
Now will they feel the winter of their course,
Then grieving fade and quietly droop away
Without complaint, without perceived sighs.
And there in Lethe's dismal water-bed
Oblivion may them hold for evermore.
Complain? Why should the dust-born flowers
complain,

Who destined are to smile and then to die?
Perchance they, too, have met a sunny smile
Within the chilly coldness of this world,
And drawn, indeed, from that diviner hope
Of life immortal and communion long
With loving children of th' immortal dust.
To die is naught, yea, pass to fiery hells
A consolation to a frozen heart;
'Tis better thus than be fore'er a flower
Unblown, though never dying in its husks.

G. G. WENZLAFF

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

TWO BOOKS

THE OLD YEAR

Write "Finis" at the end, and close the book!
Into the silent past the year has gone,
Its joys and griefs and busy cares are done,
And so let struggling cease the while we look
With inward gaze upon the year we've
known,
The hidden record of our lives, now grown
A very part of us, from which we took
Eternal impress for our good or ill;
Careless, perhaps, and heeding not the power
Of passing thoughts and little acts of will
To mold our lives. Alas! we shrink and cower
From the dark picture printed there, until
Blithe Hope, upspringing new, bids us fulfill
The better part, and blesses all the hour.

THE NEW YEAR

Out of the old the new has come to-day,
Out of the clouds the brave sun brightly
shines,
The crudeness of the past, new love refines,
And all our dark'ning shades have passed away.
A fair new book with white unwritten lines,
New grapes of life unpressed to bitter wines,
The Lord of all gives us again. But stay!
When we would write, or taste the fruit so
fair,
Some heaviness still holds our willing hands,
Some dullness palls the waiting palate;
there,

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

Holding secure, around us are the bands
The old year wrought, the heavy bands of
care

Bound by our untaught hearts, which we
must bear,

Till we have learned the lesson He commands.

FLORA M. THORNTON SWIFT

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

EVENING

The glorious orb of day has sunk to rest.
The oriole has sought her swinging nest.
The eventide draws on. The meadow-lark
Is hushed as all the softened world grows dark.
The silvery moon ascends above the hill,
While myriad stars the vault of heaven fill.
I listen to the last song of a dove—
I rest—I sleep—I dream—of thee, my love.

B. W. BURLIGH

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

THE FOUR BARDS

The merry laugh and shout had died away
Within Walhalla thronged with heroes blest.
Majestic sat the chieftain Wodan there,
And looked with noble brow and gracious mien
Upon the host assembled at his feet,
Expectant of the things to come.

Now Wodan, ruler of the heavenly throng,
Did ope his mouth to speak his lordly will.
He spake, and like the murmur of the deep
His words fell gently on attentive ears:
"Bring forth, ye heroes, from this concourse
 great
The bards who found their entrance to this hall
With hope to quaff their mead and wear the
 wreath,
Like heroes slain in bloody battle rage.
If they can show that what they spoke or sang
Helped heroes live and die more hero-like,
Then may their lot be in Walhalla blest.
But if their work heroic deed ne'er caused,
Then was their harp to voice attuned in vain,
And must oblivion be their just reward."

These words did Wodan utter to the throng,
And in assent the heroes clashed their shields,
That like a thunder-peal re-echoed through
The spacious hall of blest Walhalla.

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

When silence now again was all restored,
There came from out the hero-throng
Four aged bards before the honored seat
To tell the story of their words and song,
And hear the final sentence then pronounced.
Now beckoned was the first to state his case.
With kindled eye and trembling voice he said:
"O god, to this majestic hall I came,
Not borne aloft on Walkyr swan-like wings,
But when my life breathed out its mortal last,
Then took my soul its flight upon the winds;
Those winds that oft had wafted far away
To unknown parts, my songs and strains of
harp.

And here am I in Walhal's splendor rare
Accounting for the lays I sang on earth,
And for the strains I culled from this my harp.
I sang of youth and love and spring and day,
And alway joyous was attuned the lay.
The sparkling drink, the merry laugh and shout,
The rippling brook, the sunny field and glade,
The roaring wood, the warbling bird and maid—
Oh! only bright things did I sing on earth,
To cheer the heart and make the world more
bright,
For Brightness is its name."

Thus spake the bard,
And round Walhalla went a murmur low,
And thoughtful looked the wisest of the gods.
"O aged bard," said he, with gentle voice,
"Well didst thou do to see on earth the bright,
And cheer the hearts of mortals there below.

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

But lo! thou saw'st the sparkle on the wave
And not the angry deep; the wafting air
And not the raging storm; the beaming cup
And not the fatal brawl; the gilded youth
And not the sham of life. Ah! simple bard,
Of such stern things how shallow was thy view!
Thy song was sweet, but like the thing besung
Short-lived and evanescent as the dew
Resplendent on the blade in bright Morn's sun.
Ill service did the wind to bear thee here,
When real and not appearance makes the worth.
But as thy song so be thy stay with us:
A moment while and then forever part.—
But now speak thou, O bard, with downcast face,
And tell thy tale in brief."

The bard began:

"Alas! my story's long as life was short.
But, Wodan, list, the sham of life was long
And trouble had no end, as well I saw.
And as I saw, thus to my harp I sang.
All brightness was to foolish man a snare
To bring misfortune on his earthly fare.
'Alas!' I sang, and in that strain of gloom
I found the comfort of our earthly doom."

These cheerless words the second bard did speak
Before assembled throng and Wodan wise.
Then Wodan answered in as cheerless voice:
"'Alas!' I, too, must say, O wiser bard,
That life is brief and trouble long and hard.
Thou wiser wast than he who first did speak,
As thou didst see beyond the joys that fleet,
And warn the unaware of grief and ruin.

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

A serious view thou hadst of life so stern,
Yet shallow was thy song, too sad thy strain.
Enjoy then here, O bard, the proffered mead,
Then part thou to that gloomy, sunless land
Of Hel, the daughter pale of Loki grim,
There will thy song accord."

"Thy song accord!"

The hall of Wodan seemed to echo forth.
Another bard then spoke in his defense:
"I, too, O Wodan stern, ask thee to list.
I lived my life the best I knew and could.
I welcomed sunlight, made the best of gloom,—
In short, I took all things as they did come."

At these high words the heroes were rejoiced,
And Wodan smiled as he to him replied:
"A hero wast to take the ills with joys,
And wise wast thou to see the whole of life.
Rejoice then here with us the best thou canst,
Let Chance then bear thee where she will or
may,
For thou a son of Chance hast been alway."

Then Wodan silent nodded to the last,
That he might, too, relate his earthly course.
Then thus did speak the bard before the throng:
"My view of life was quite a simple one,
And Mystery was its name, and Deed its goal.
Full many a spring with budding tree and bush
Has passed away since I, a beardless youth,
First touched the harp to draw from it its song.
Then strength and hope and fire were in my
veins.

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

The winds and leaves then whispered love
to me;
Each bird and beetle brought me then some
word

From worlds unknown to mortal eye and ear;
On every ledge that saw its shadow dark
Reflected in the wave, a Lorley sang.
The flowing rivers murmured low and soft
And roared and dashed and piped and splashed
aloft

And sang a tale so endless, awful, deep—
A mystic tale for youthful ear so sweet.

"I sang of this, then came the call, To Arms!
Then saw I woes and ills in myriad swarms
That sprang from hating hearts all craving
blood.

Oh! direful war that stains, and rends in twain
The tenderest bonds of earth, and crimson turns
The stream that flows 'tween crimson-colored
banks.

"My harp was mute, but war at last did end.
Did end? Alas! life's struggles never end
Till life itself does cease to throb and glow.
Has not each precious life its threatening foe?
The roaring wind sweeps over plain and wold,
And snaps the gnarled oak, uproots the pine,
And scatters like mere chaff the huts of men.
The waters smile, then scowling, whirling draw
The fated bather to their oozy depths.
The fowler pipes his sweetest call, and lo!
The sylvan songster struggles in the toil;
So creatures, small and great, upon the land,

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

And in the waters cool and ether blue,
All seek their living prey as man seeks his.

"My harp was still and I sought solitude.
Beneath the drooping willow boughs, that view
The slothful, murky stream, I found retreat;
And there upon the tender grass I lay
And brooded o'er the ills of life each day,
And there my harp slept through the sunlight
hours,

Its silver chords touched by the little flowers.
Their vari-colored heads peeped through the
grass,

And smiled about so warmly, and alas!
Then bowed their earth-born little faces down
Not e'er again to raise them to the sky.
The balmy summer winds did mourn and sigh,
And gloomy flowed the darksome river by.

"One day aroused was I from this my dream,
To see there struggling in the darksome stream
A human form near by an o'erturned craft.
I sprang to aid, and yet, alas! I could
But draw upon the shore a lifeless youth.
I wrapped him in my mantle gray, and bore
Him to his mother's feet. What there I saw
Of anguish of the soul, no words can tell.
I see it still. 'Oh! had I saved the boy
Or could I bring to life again,' I sighed
Within. But glassy were his eyes, and cold
His purple lips. 'Begone, my former self!
Depart, thou brooding mind, and do thou help
To make the world more bright!' I cried aloud.
I snatched my harp determined now to sing

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

Of life as life appeared to me at last.
I looked *at* life, and sparkling was its garb;
And *into* life, and gruesome was its heart;
And *through* all life—ah! *through* I could not
peer;

For, mortal eye cannot break through the veil
That wisely shrouds the mystery of the gods.
For, life is like the swallow on its flight;
It cometh from a far-off unknown land,
And parteth as it came, into the night.
I sang: 'What need we mysteries of the gods
When we still have the beaming light of life?
What need we alway have the joyous day,
So long as we have right and dauntless wills?
Ah! strike the common foe that would destroy
The hearth and slay the herd, the wife and boy.
Combat all ills with vig'rous heart and hands
And waste no precious hours in idle sighs;
For, vig'rous deed is what this life demands,
And this is what will make the world more
bright.'

With this strange song upon my lips thus wise,
I wandered near and far 'mong many folk
Until at last my aged life's strength broke,
And I was wafted to Walhalla."

Thus spake the bard, and then the throng did
shout:

"This is the bard full surely of our heart!
For him the wreath! For him the laurel wreath!
And may he dwell here in Walhalla!"

G. G. WENZLAFF

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

SUBMISSION

Sweet, thou hast trod on a heart;
 Pass, there's a world full of men,
And women as fair as thou art
 Must do such things now and then.

True, only the heart of a friend
 That thou hast trod upon, unaware
Of aught but thy halcyon trend;
 But why should a heart have been there?

Forbid that in after years,
 When the bloom and the dimples are gone,
Thine eyes look to God through the tears
 Of thy sorrow for what thou hast done.

Forbid that in silence apart,
 Thy soul the sad prayer shall know,
"Would God I had only the heart
 That I trod upon ages ago."

CHARLES E. HOLMES

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

I STOOD ALONE BESIDE A LITTLE MOUND

I stood alone beside a little mound
I know so well that lies upon the hill,
And wondered long, as one grief-stricken will,
Had agony before reached depths profound
As these? Had yet one known such pain or
found

A life as spiritless, or heart so chill
As mine had been since nature subtly still
Enwrapped the mystery of death around
That little form of hers, my first-born child?
Hard punishment it seemed, all I could bear.
But now, when I another hopeless find
Weeping for one grown nameless and defiled,
I think of my own dear one lying there,
And feel that death to me was almost kind.

CHARLES BRACY LAWTON

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

EVENING IN DAKOTA

The breeze dies down,
The air is fresh and fragrant. The budding
trees
Exhausted by the long unbroken pressure,
Uplift their drooping leaves and drink the dew
Which gives them nourishment and sustenance.

The boisterous wind
Is stilled at last, as though worn out
By its own turbulence. The flagging heart
revives;
The tensioned nerves relax their rigorous strain,
Easing the fevered brow and throbbing pulse.

The placid stars
In far-off azure heights, peep shyly out
And to the tired eyes bring soothing sleep.
A sense of rest pervades the atmosphere—
Nature seems hushed in quiet thankfulness.

SAM T. CLOVER

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

LULLABY

Sleep, sleep, little ones, sleep;
Under the waves of your fairy-like curls.
Little eyes weighted with baby-bright blisses,
Little cheeks freighted with lily-light kisses,
Sleep, little girls.

Dream, dream, little ones, dream;
Sail far away from the region of tears.
Little eyes weary of constant surprise,
Little cheeks teary from weary-worn eyes,
Dream, little dears.

CHARLES E. HOLMES

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

OUT OF TUNE

He pipes and pipes discordant strains
 Into each passing ear,
And prates of all his plagues and pains
 To those he holds most dear.
He hides no bitterness, no blight,
 No wounds of sordid grief;
He drags them all into the light,
 And hopes to find relief.

He chaunts a dirge in solemn breath
 Along the public way,
He flaunts the ceremonies of death
 Where prattling children play;
He drowns all memory of song
 And lets some flower bleed,
While listening for the note sung wrong,
 While cherishing some weed.

He wanders through the summer days,
 Though they be faultless fair,
And does not hear the roundelays
 Vibrating everywhere;
But pipes and pipes his weary note
 On through the busy noon,
Unmindful that his own poor throat
 Is singing out of tune.

CHARLES BRACY LAWTON

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

TO LET

A vacant heart to let; inquire for key
Of Master Cupid, just across the way;
Terms easy to the tenant who'll agree
To sign a lease forever and a day.

A cozy dwelling in a pleasant street,
And just adjacent to Old Courtship road;
A bit old-fashioned, but with furnace heat—
Where Love may find a very snug abode.

The agent, Cupid, will be glad to show
The premises to any maid or miss;
He'll make the price ridiculously low,
And asks as his commission but a kiss.

Coy maiden, come! and in this bargain share;
The offer's tempting by your own confession;
You'll find the place in excellent repair—
Accept the terms and enter in possession.

SAM T. CLOVER

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

MESSAGES

In the drear dusk of eventide entuned,
The winds are whispering their many moods;
The song the lonely Indian maiden crooned
To the bold blast that waves her native
woods;

The eagle's cry that aerieward was sent
To warn her eaglets of the hostile howl
Of wolves that wail beneath her battlement;
The cry of coyote and the hoot of owl:

These are the sounds blent in the northern
blast,
The overtones of Boreas' trumpet call;
Upon the winged winds I too will cast
A song of sorrow that, perchance, may fall

Upon the silence of the southern air
And from their hiding bid the echoes start
And wake my loved one, who is dreaming there,
That she may hear the message of my heart.

CHARLES E. HOLMES

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

AS YE DESIRE

As ye deserve, it shall be meted so;
As ye deserve, death through eternity!
Can mortal worth lift leaden lid, set free
The soul that stifles there in sin-born woe?
As ye desire, ye shall in wisdom grow;
As ye desire—desire shall ever be
The complement of Christ's Nativity.
Most merit lies in the desire we show.
Desire from out the sin-clogged heart can rise,
Purl like the spring within the brackish stream.
On in its chastening course to deep seas flow,
And, widening there, the soul immortalize.
Be, then, desire the heart's sincerest theme;
Desiring well, ye shall deserve it so.

CHARLES BRACY LAWTON

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

THE MEADOW-LARK

Before the last of winter's drift has thawed
And run in rills to swell the creek, that glides
Among the rushes drear and willows gray,
The meadow-lark, the herald of the spring,
Comes piping in the drowsy life that hides
From grim, all-devastating frosts away.

And when the first bold flower,—the violet,
Or 'tis th' anemone—wide opes its eyes
Upon the quiet meads to greet the morn,
The prairie's homely bird sings matin lays,
That clear and sweet mount swelling to the
skies
And then on ether wings are softly borne.

When twilight shades come o'er this prairie
world
In summer's garb, and thousand eyes then
close
Upon the waning splendor of the evening sky,
The meadow-lark's clear roundelay resounds
And lulls sun-sated life to cool repose—
Ne'er heard the flowers a sweeter lullaby!

At last the fields, once gay, stand sad and sear,
And silent is the crickets' chorus-song.
The weary blossom, drooping on the stem,
Now sleeps its long, long sleep, and weary looks
The sun. The meadow-lark, of all the throng
Of birds, remains to pipe the requiem.

G. G. WENZLAFF

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

LIMITATION

Embarrassed by his soul's profane duress
An artist begged Perfection, that she ope
His eyes unto her perfect loveliness;
'Twas done—he turned bereft of every hope.

MODESTY

She was as modest as the moon at night,
That hides herself within the clouded skies
To keep her maiden blushes from the sight
Of naughty stars that wink their saucy eyes!

WEIN, WEIB UND GESANG

Sweet, it is said that woman, wine and song
Are all of happiness, and yet along
With you and song I well could spare the wine;
And yet could spare the song, if you were
mine.

FLOWER-FAITH

Down in the wild-wood, where deeply the snow
And drifting leaves cover and hide it,
Too darkened by shadows to see how to grow,
It trusted in Nature to guide it.

CHARLES E. HOLMES

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

THAT DAY

It will not matter then to me
If thou be near or far away.
I shall not care, thou wilt be free;
I shall not ask one hour of thee
When we have lived that last sweet day.

No, not one tear of vain regret
Give thou to me; no sackcloth wear.
Bring thou no lilies. Rather let
Them shape for thee a coronet
And place it on thy shining hair.

For I shall not among all men
Envy one's station, rank or birth;
I shall be king above them then,
With knowing crowned and sceptered when
I shall have passed away from earth.

CHARLES BRACY LAWTON

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

MY SONG

I heard a song so subtly sweet; the theme
seemed filled with danger,
As heart-tones that we recognize awakening for
some stranger.
Out through the night I followed it, the
melody long swelling;
Then lightly low it came to me as some young
spring comes welling
From in among the hidden coves of inland
bays and reaches,
And laughing runs to smooth the shells on
sandy, shadowed beaches.
I marked so long its rise and fall, its harmony
enthraling,
That when I turned the way was lost beyond
my own recalling.
O song of heart, my heart, my song, my day-
dream brimmed with gladness!
O happy, fulsome song of love, my melody of
madness!
Ah! would that I had not made free to know
whence came the singing,
I had not found the cerements so close about it
clinging.
If heart had listened on in faith, love had not
known disaster,
Nor that the motif of the song was purer than
the master.

CHARLES BRACY LAWTON

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

KICK OF THE RANCH HAND

Dern my hide, I feel so lazy,
Feel so stretchy, feel so dazy,
When th' ole, red day is dawnin',
An' I'm layin' here an' yawnin',
Thinkin' if I had a dollar,
Like to see th' man who'd holler,
Or e'en dare to, whisp'rin', say:
"Git up, Jim; don't sleep all day."

What man is there in this land
Has th' trubbles of a hand?
Go to bed at dark an' more,
You git up at half-past four;
An' you pail 'bout forty-six
Gosh-blamed cow-brutes, an' th' tricks
That they play an' put on you
Jes' would make an angel stew.

Honestly, I git so mad
That sometimes I wish I had
Power to jes' make one swipe,
An' each kickin' cow-brute wipe
Off this whirlin', jiggy earth,
Fer 't would give me scads of mirth—
Honestly, I know it would
Do me jes' a sight of good.

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

An' there's pigs to slop an' feed,
Give th' hosses what they need;
See th' chickens all are fed,
An' th' pigins overhead.
An' there's water fer to bring,
From that singy-songy spring;
An' there's wood to chop—an' all
This is done 'fore breakfast call.

Then you hook th' plow-team on,
An' go stragglin' through th' dawn;
Work an' work an' sweat all day,
Work an' work an' work away
Dern my hide, I feel so lazy,
Feel so stretchy, feel so dazy,
An' th' ole red day is dawnin',
An' I'm layin' here an' ya-a-a-aw-nin'.
ROBERT V. CARR

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

THE BUTTERCUP

Little floweret, peeping up,
Dainty, tiny buttercup,
Nodding in the matin breeze,
Laughing, dancing on the leas,
Nestling in thy painted eye
Round thee hangs the butterfly;
Bending low thy penciled stem,
E'en thy yellow diadem.

Now a cloud obscures the sky,
Now a shadow hurries by;
Lo, a sunbeam's dimpled ray
On thy cheek's again at play!
Sweet, refulgent child of Spring,
How we whistle, how we sing,
When we see thee come again
To make glad the haunts of men!
Would that all like thee might be,
Happy child of liberty!

ANDREW F. BURLEIGH, JR.

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

MY PAL AND I

We've ridden together in wind and rain,
My pal and I,
When the storm-king ruled on the rolling plain
And the torn clouds romped in his whirling
train,
O'er the smitten sky.

We've tramped together with gun and dog,
My pal and I,
And watched in the rain from a fallen log
For the wild duck's flight through the
river fog,
While the dawn flushed high.

We've supped together of joy and woe,
My pal and I,
We've whipped life's stream as the stream
would flow
And found all trails are less hard to go
With each other by.

JOSEPH MILLS HANSON

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

FER I'M A BOY

Where is th' bestest huntin' now?
Where do th' rabbits go
An' make their tracks an' leave their trails
Across th' nice new snow?
I guess I know—
I guess I know,
Fer I'm a boy.

Where has th' squirrel his cupboard an'
The little chipmonk, too?
An' lots an' lots of secrits that
I hain't a-tellin' you?
I guess I know—
I guess I know,
Fer I'm a boy.

Where is th' chickens gone an' hid —
Th' ones what whirs their wings?
Why, you don't know much as a kid,
About such common things.
I guess I know—
I guess I know,
Fer I'm a boy.

ROBERT V. CARR

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

LOVE

No, Love shall linger while old Time shall
last,
While worlds shall gyrate in their orbits
clear.
While stars their rays upon the earth shall
cast
And liquid suns shall shine, Love will be
here.
'Tis Love whose mighty magic holds us fast
To what we are; for Love we shed a tear;
We smile for Love; for Love the flowers
bloom;
Love lights the world; Love radiates the
tomb.

ANDREW F. BURLEIGH, JR.

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

THE CAMP'S ASLEEP

The camp's asleep and through the gloom,
The white-topped wagons spectral loom;
And weird the lonesome coyotes call,
And quiet stars stand watch o'er all.
The fire's down, the shadows creep;
Their work is done, the camp's asleep.

ROBERT V. CARR

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

PRAIRIE WOLVES

Up where the white bluffs fringe the plain,
When heaven's lights are on the wane,
/ They sing their songs as demons might
Shriek wild a chorus to the night.
Gaunt, gray brutes with dripping fangs,
And eyes aflame with hunger-pangs;
With lips curled back in snarls of hate,
They wail a curse against their fate.

ROBERT V. CARR

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

THE COTTONWOOD TREE

The cottonwood, the subject oft of sneer,
Stands watch far on the plains. With branches
wide

It shelters there the westward moving tide
Of human souls, a noble pioneer.

Oft times the immigrant, when blanched
with fear,

Is glad to greet this stately, faithful guide
And camp refreshed by its friendly side,

While tenting where the world is scant
with cheer.

Then as his weary eyes are closed in sleep

And all is still, as only night can be,

Kind Nature with a mystic hand doth sweep

The hidden harp-strings high within the
tree,

And bid a zephyr 'mongst the leaf-tongues
creep,

That they may sing the songs of some
far sea.

B. W. BURLEIGH

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

LARAMIE TRAIL

Across the crests of the naked hills,
Smooth swept by the winds of God,
It cleaves its way like a shaft of gray,
Close bound by the prairie-sod.
It stretches flat from the sluggish Platte
To the lands of forest shade,
The clean trail, the lean trail,
The trail the troopers made.

It draws aside with a wary curve
From the lurking, dark ravine,
It launches fair as a lance in the air
O'er the raw-ribbed ridge between,
With never a wait it plunges straight
Through river or reed-grown brook,
The deep trail, the steep trail,
The trail the squadrons took.

They carved it well, those men of old,
Stern lords of border war,
They wrought it out with their sabres stout
And marked it with their gore;
They made it stand as an iron band
Along the wild frontier,—
The strong trail, the long trail,
The trail of force and fear.

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

For the stirring note of the bugle's throat
Ye may hark to-day in vain,
For the track is scarred by the gang-plow's
shard

And gulfed in the growing grain.
But wait to-night for the moonrise white:
Perchance ye may see them tread
The lost trail, the ghost trail,
The trail of the gallant dead.

'Twixt cloud and cloud, o'er the pallid moon,
From the nether dark they glide,
And the grasses sigh as they rustle by,
Their phantom steeds astride,
By four and four, as they rode of yore,
And well they know the way,—
The dim trail, the grim trail,
The trail of toil and fray.

With tattered guidons spectral thin
Above their swaying ranks,
With carbines swung and sabres slung
And the gray dust on their flanks,
They march again as they marched it then
When the red men dogged their track,—
The gloom trail, the doom trail,
The trail they came not back.

They pass, like a flutter of drifting fog,
As the hostile tribes have passed,
As the wild-winged birds and the bison herds
And the unfenced prairies vast,

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

And those who gain by their strife and pain
Forget, in the land they won,
The red trail, the dead trail,
The trail of duty done.

But to him who loves heroic deeds
The far-flung path still bides,
The bullet sings and the war-whoop rings
And the stalwart trooper rides.
For they were the sort from Snelling fort
Who traveled fearlessly
The bold trail, the old trail,
The trail to Laramie.

JOSEPH MILLS HANSON

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

MERCENARY BARDS

"How many roads there are, or fast or slow
To fame that lead or dark oblivion go!"
Thus sings the giddy poet to himself.
But most are traveling on the road to pelf.
Their god is Mammon, and they him adore;
For him they'd die, without him write no
more.
Gold gilds their harps; 'tis gold they view
beyond;
They strike to gold, to gold their muse is
pawned.

ANDREW F. BURLEIGH, JR.

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

THE PINES SING WILD AND THE WINDS ARE FREE

Oh, the peaks loom white against the sky—
The pines sing wild and the winds are free;
And the sluices roar and the foam leaps high—
The pines sing wild and the winds are free.
The sunset's flame is tinged with gold—
The pines sing wild and the winds are free;
The gods of to-day are the gods of old—
The pines sing wild and the winds are free.

Through mist and rain and spring-storm's
strife

The pines sing wild and the winds are free;
And opening buds and the dawn of life—
The pines sing wild and the winds are free.
Come away with me, through shine and rain—
The pines sing wild and the winds are free;
We'll splash through the flood in the mountain
lane—
The pines sing wild and the winds are free.

Come away with me; the canyon's dim—
The pines sing wild and the winds are free;
There're greenish tufts on the aspen slim—
The pines sing wild and the winds are free.
There's a song for you and a song for me—
The pines sing wild and the winds are free;
'Tis the spring's own sweet, sweet minstrelsy—
The pines sing wild and the winds are free.

ROBERT V. CARR

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

THE GOLD SEEKER

Alone he roamed the Hills of Blue,
Believing all he heard was true;
For listened he to spirits sing
With golden voices in the spring:
"Come thou," sang they — sang they to him;
"Come thou, and to the very brim
Of thy desire we'll heap the gold
Until thou biddest us to hold."

And thus he passed the stern ranks through
Of guarding pines, tall warriors true;
Down twisted canyons, upland parks;
O'er crags that bore the Storm-king's marks;
And through the aspen-sheltered dells,
Where, grass-enthroned, the lily dwells.
He crossed the treeless, barren lands,
Bereft of gifts from Nature's hands;
He passed the Silent Waterway,
Half hidden from the light of day,
And just beyond the Golden Park
He made his camp, and through the dark
His fire flaunted flags of flame
And mocked the shadows in their shame.

The dawning found him circling 'round
With eyes e'er watchful of the ground;
A bit of quartz, or worthless shale,
Each told to him a wondrous tale.
The hieroglyphics of the rills
That marked the faces of the hills

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

He read with ease and knowing look,
As one who reads a simple book.
Each dip and ridge and bend and bar,
Each dead-tree pit, each mound and mar,
Each contour of the bedrock's rim —
All gave their secrets up to him.

And thus he searched for days — aye, years —
All thrilled with hopes or crushed with fears,
Until his brown locks turned to gray
And dreams of youth had passed away;
Yet through the dark and through the dawn
The golden voices lured him on.

And it came to pass that he found the gold,
A mine of treasure manifold;
White, glittering quartz, all ribbed and seamed
With rusty veins that dully gleamed.

* * * * *

The candle flickers, and o'er the wall
The weird, wild shadows leap and crawl;
A tattered blanket and a bed of hay,
And foolish talk of his find that day —
Old Man and Death in a cabin drear.
Now hovers the sable Presence near
And counts each gasping breath until
The pain-worn face is calm and still;
Then speaks: "This night have I chosen thee:
Be unafraid; come thou with me."

And the gold, the gold, the dull-gleaming gold,
'Twas hidden again by the drift and the mold;
And a hunter that passed o'er the trail one day
Found the cabin untenanted—except with clay.

ROBERT V. CARR

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

SPEAK NOT TO ME OF PLEASURE

Speak not to me of pleasure,
Nor youth's delusive hour;
For me there is no joy again,
No light in beauty's bower.
Let not the silver chord be struck,
Nor break upon mine ear;
For there's a dream I must not dream
And a name I cannot hear.

Wake not again, fond memory,
Bright star of glory set !
Forever let thy sunken rays
In fallen tears be wet.
Raise not again life's shattered hope,
Lest it should start a tear;
For there's a dream I must not dream
And a name I cannot hear.
ANDREW F. BURLEIGH, JR.

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

PRAIRIE FIRE

Over the lonely prairie
The autumn twilight dies;
Quick, fitful winds through the hollows pass,
That moan and sigh in the long, dry grass,
And anon a kildee cries.
The cloaking darkness gathers;
But what is the rose tint there,
That flushes the far horizon
Like a distant city's glare?

It gathers and grows and widens,
It swallows the southward sky,
And the timid wind, like a hunted deer,
Makes pause to hearken, then leaps in fear
And shrieks as it hurries by;
The zenith glows to crimson
In the baleful, fevered light
And the rolling hill-tops waver,
Sharp-drawn on the walls of night.

And now, as a wide-flung army,
Hurled hot on the foemen's spears,
With plumes of smoke on its tossing head,
With flaring banners and lances red,
The whelming flood appears.
It runs like a wolf in hunger,
It roars like a mountain storm,
And before it the fleeing creatures
Of the fated prairie swarm.

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

Pigeon and grouse and plover—
The air is alive with wings,
And the firm ground shakes with the pound-
ing feet
Of bellowing bison in mad retreat,
And the panic of smaller things.
Behind them the flames speed onward
O'er level and slope and swale,
And the tall grass melts to embers,
Whirled high on the parching gale.

As strong as the ocean's billows,
As fierce as the blizzard's breath,
Is aught in Nature that may withstand
The league-long sweep of this scorching brand
That blasts the plains with death?
Ahead is a waiting darkness,
A shadow athwart the glare,
And the wild things have turned them to it,
For they know there is safety there

The river, at last, the river!
A haven where all may hide!
With toil-spent lungs and with straining feet
They reel from the smoke and the peeling heat
To plunge in its grateful tide,
While the tongue of the hungry demon
Licks out on the naked sand
And slavers its baffled fury
And sinks, like a dying hand.

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

Over the lonely prairie
The wan, white moonrise grows;
From out of the north a chill wind rides
That spins the ash on the black hill-sides
And anon an ember glows.
The clustered stars of midnight
Flash keen in the purple deep;
The hollows and hills are empty;
The ravished prairies sleep.

JOSEPH MILLS HANSON

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

FLOOD-SONG OF THE MOUNTAINS

Rain-drenched rest the spruces,
The water-worn sluices
Run high with the floods of the year's cleans-
ing time;
While the echo-haunts thunder
The towering cliffs under,
A lost river moans where the cave-voices
chime.

Where shaggy pines wander
O'er crags looming yonder,
The wind sobs for aye like a mortal in pain;
And mists roll in masses
Through flame-blackened passes,
Gray warriors with plumes all a-drip in the
rain.

Wildly sweet is the singing
Of glad torrents bringing
Fair gifts to the plains and the valleys below,
Fair gifts of green bowers
And grass-sheltered flowers,
And all of the joys that the spring-spirits
know.

ROBERT V. CARR

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

A FELLER GITS DREAMY ONCE IN A WHILE

A feller gits dreamy once in a while,
As dreamy as dreamy kin be,
An' somethin' like that, I'm a-thinkin' jes'
now,
Is sort o' affectin' me —
Sort o' affectin' me—
Sort o' affectin' me.

I see in my dreams th' willer-banked streams
Where th' trout splash th' riffles with sunshiny
gleams;
I see a cool place where th' white waters race
An' th' shadders move 'long at a time takin'
pace.
I see jes' as plain th' twist in th' lane,
With th' little green leaves all a-drinkin'
th' rain;
An' th' hills in a haze an' th' long, lazy days,
When a feller's whole heart at fergitfulness
plays.

A feller gits dreamy once in a while,
As dreamy as dreamy kin be,
An' somethin' like that, I'm a-thinkin' jes'
now,
Is sort o' affectin' me —
Sort o' affectin' me—
Sort o' affectin' me.

ROBERT V. CARR

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

PRAIRIE-CHICKEN TIME

When the long, hot summer's fadin'
An' the nights are cool an' still,
When the goldenrod an' asters
Bloom on every prairie hill,
When the air is keen with hoar-frost
An' the year is in its prime,
Then's when life gets best worth livin',
Fer it's prairie-chicken time.

Oh, it's then in early mornin',
While the sun's first, golden rays
Change the far-off hills to purple
Through the Injin summer haze,
That it beats ten years' existence
Far in any other clime
Jest to tramp the fields an' re'lize
That it's prairie-chicken time.

With a wise old dog a-rangin'
Through the stubble-fields an' grass,
An' the crickets jumpin' crossways
From the furrows as you pass,
While you watch that dog like pizen
Till he stiffens to a set,
Then you know the covey's waitin'
Fer to jest get up an' get.

Then yer finger's on the trigger
An' yer heart is beatin' fast,
Fer it seems that dog's each footfall
Must now surely be the last,

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

Till there comes a whir an' flurry
An' the chickens— there they go,
Spreadin' out acrost the corn-fields,
An' a-flyin' swift an' low.

You may fetch one with each barrel,
You may miss 'em all with four,
But it doesn't make much diff'rence
When you come to count the score;
Fer it isn't jest the killin'
That makes you feel so sublime,
When you're roamin' through the uplands
And it's prairie-chicken time.

It's the breeze acrost the meadows,
An' the smell o' ripened corn;
It's the far-off straw-stacks shinin'
In the level light o' morn;
It's the lark upon the fence-post
An' the ring-dove's mournful cry,
An' the white clouds driftin' lazy
In the deep, blue, dreamy sky.

Oh, ag'in I want them old days
That have gone fer good, I guess,
When each pleasure held no canker,
An' each joy no bitterness;
When the heart was young an' care-free
An' the day was one long rhyme,
On the wide Dakota hill-sides
In the prairie-chicken time.

JOSEPH MILLS HANSON

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

IN MEMORIAM

(To My Mother)

That tender voice, alas! is gone.
Those beauteous orbs which brightly shone,
That form seraphic, round which blazed
A living halo, time has razed
To silent dust. That angel-step,
Which like a winged spirit swept
With tinkling footfalls o'er life's floor—
Alas! it wakes no echo more.
Those loving arms, once childhood's nest,
Now withering lie. That snowy breast,
Love's first elysium—death, alas!
Has kissed it back to that it was.
Those sweet lips, where love's kisses grew—
Alas! they now lie withering, too.

ANDREW F. BURLEIGH, JR.

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

LET'S GO BACK

Let's go back an' let's go loafin' where th'
willers lean an' bend,
Where th' colors of th' canyon like a picture's
softly blend.
Let's go back an' lay a-dreamin' where th'
tiger lilies grow,
Where th' hoss-mint an' th' roses all th' love
of summer know.

Let's go back an' let us wander in th' twi-
light — you an' I —
When there's jes' a ghost of glory in th' faint
an' fadin' sky,
When th' night-hawks are a-boomin' an' th'
sleepy oat-field's still,
An' there's shadders in th' gulches an' there's
shadders on th' hill.

Let's go back an' go a-trailin' when th' leaves
are gittin' red,
When th' squir'ls are talkin' sassy in th'
tree-tops overhead,
When it's gittin' sort o' hazy, with a crispness
in th' air,
An' there's gold an' crimson gleamin' on th'
hill-sides ev'rywhere.

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

Let's go back where life's worth livin'; let's
go back, jes' you an' I;

Let's go back an' in th' open let us live an'
let us die.

Let's go back, big boys together, where we
uster gladly roam —

Come now, pardner, let's go trailin', let's go
trailin' back fer home.

ROBERT V. CARR

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

VESPER

Down the winding field-path
In the sunset's splendor,
Brushed by wayside flowers,
Loitering they go,
She with lashes downcast,
He with glances tender—
Oh, that summer evening,
Long, so long ago!

From the dewy pasture
Faint a cow-bell tinkles;
Dreamily a stray breeze
Rustles through the corn.
In the still, blue zenith
Evening's first star twinkles—
Oh, that summer evening,
When sweet love was born!

Draws the dusk about them:
Youth and Love slow wending,
Knowing not the sorrows
Time may hold in store;
Heart to heart together
To the field-path's ending—
Oh, thou summer evening,
Back, come back once more!

JOSEPH MILLS HANSON

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

PLEASURE AND PAIN

Yes, Pleasure and Pain are a tandem team,
Abroad in all kinds of weather,
And whether you know it or not, my lad,
They are always yoked together.

The first has a coat of silken sheen,
With mane like the moonbeams streaming,
And a tail like the fleecy cloud at night,
When the winds and the waves are dreaming.

And he moves like a barque o'er the sapphire
seas,
As his feet the earth are spurning,
And his breath is blown through his nostrils
wide,
And his eyes like stars are burning.

Ah, gaily he rides who bestrides this steed,
And flies o'er the world with laughter!
But whether you know it or not, my lad,
There's a dark steed coming after.

For, hard behind with a tireless pace,
Comes Pain like a wivern, faster,
And whether you will it or not, my lad,
You must mount on him thereafter.

His nostrils are bursting with smoke and
flame,
From fires that within are burning,

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

And whether you rue it or not, my lad,
There is no hope of returning.

Each hair on his sides is a bristling spear,
That is poisoned with lost desires,
That rankles and burns in your quivering
flesh
That is seared by the fiendish fires.

And whether you will it or not, my lad,
You may never dismount from Pain,
Till for every mile that you rode the first,
You have ridden the latter twain.

ROLLIN J. WELLS

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

THE LAND OF DREAMS

O land so dear, so near, unseen,
In which we live and love and dream!
O happy kingdom, where are spent
The hours of youth in sweet content!
Where every bell with rapture rings,
And love in low-voiced music sings!

Thy twilight aisles of forest green
Are peopled with the folk unseen,
Whose footsteps fall in rhythmic beat
To music faint and far and sweet
Of dryad pipe and elfin horn,
From moon-lit eve to misty morn.

O happy land, O happy man,
Where every thing works out to plan
With fortune, fame, and castle spires!
Where every thing the heart desires
Is wafted over golden seas
In golden winged Argosies!

We turn to thee with outstretched hand;
In attitude expectant stand.
Let age not raze our castle spires,
Nor rob our hearts of youthful fires!
Vouchsafe to us these faint foregleams
Of thy blest fields, O land of dreams!

ROLLIN J. WELLS

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

TO THE END OF TIME

(In memory of Sarah F. Ward.)

We should not weep nor alway grieve, for all
We bore her out beneath the somber pall
To yonder sleepy hill. Though clouds surround

And lone the height and chill the granite
bound

That marks where cerements invest and hold
The ashes of a glowing life now cold,
E'en there the field-fowl pipes its heedless lay,
And buds hide, waiting for a better day.

What seek we there among the sinking mounds
And pillared knolls, where oft the dirge resounds?

Not there the soul, unmindful of the past,
Midst shoreless darkness and decay is cast,—
That soul that from unfathomed depths the
oil

Of love poured out upon a parched soil.

The hulls were burst, — a wondrous garden
grew

And bloomed, and gleamed with heaven's
sparkling dew.

Though anchored down, the branches loomed
aloft

To calmer heights, where zephyrs pure and
soft

Sang symphonies inspired not of dust,
But breathed a mystic note of love and trust.

A BOOK OF DAKOTA RHYMES

We should not weep nor alway grieve because
Unaltered stands the bitterest of God's laws.
The day dawns red, yet quick its course is run,
And darkness then engulfs, — the work is done.
But in that day we saw the gleam of eye
That shines, though sun be darkened in the
sky.

Within that gleam a world of beauty lay,
Which hope and sacrifice had built to stay.
Ah, beauteous world, whose fields are ever fair
And undefiled by Mammon's greedy care!
Its thousand hills with temples boldly crowned
Proclaim that Truth shall reign the world
around;

Its thousand paths lead e'er to righteousness;
Its lucid founts are streams of holiness.

Why should we weep or sigh or even long,
That without close shall be the inspired song?
The song is sung; the storm-clouds now sur-
round

The lonely height where stands the granite
bound.

Yet even now the spirit of that rhyme
Sings on and on until the end of time.

G. G. WENZLAFF

DAKOTA RHYMES

